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A

LETTER

To a PRIEST of the

CHURCH of *ROME*,

On the SUBJECT of

IMAGE-WORSHIP;

In ANSWER to a LETTER

Sent by Him to THO. HUNTER,

A PRIEST of the

CHURCH of *ENGLAND*.

Nunc ardet Lis illa Crucularia. Vix credas in Re fatua quantum Homines, qui ſapere aliquid videbantur, inſaniunt.——Rideo tamen, cum cogito quibus illi & quam gravibus ac ſolidis rationibus Defenſuri ſint ſuam Cruculam.

Biſhop JEWEL's *Letter to* PET. MARTYR.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is proper to acquaint the Reader, that out of Regard to the Gentleman who wrote the Letter, to which the following is an Anſwer, and at his Deſire, the Letter is not publiſhed; as he has in this Diſpute *freely expreſs'd his Sentiments, without Regard to the Public.* This, I think, is a juſt Apology for any Inaccuracy, or Negligence in Language: But as Truth, and not Elegance, is to be ſought after in a Controverſy of this Kind, Arguments impertinent or inſufficient cannot plead the ſame excuſe; they ought to be examined and expoſed, that both the Leaders and the Led may ſee what a wretched Cauſe That is, which ſtands in need of ſuch Support.

THE

THE Author of the following Letter has, further, to desire; That what he has been forced to say of Want of Charity, in the Church of *Rome*, he may not be understood to extend to every Member of that Church. He is under particular Obligation to put in this Caution, as he has the Pleasure to be acquainted with some private Gentlemen and some Priests of that Communion, of whose Humanity and Candour he has a just Esteem; and whose Practice, to their Honour, is superior to their Principles.

A LETTER *to*, &c.

SIR,

IT is now ſome Time ſince I had the Favour of your Letter: Other Engagements have occaſion'd my Delay in Acknowledging it in the Manner it deſerv'd. Nor was I aware that you would have ſhewn your Performance in public Company, proclaim'd your Triumph, and got the Mob to join in your Applauſe as a Champion unanſwerable, till you had waited awhile, and been better inform'd that I intended you no Anſwer.

BUT it was ever my Deſign, and without Compulſion, to give you a Reply; (to this Publication you have indeed forced me) tho' I might have ſaved myſelf the Trouble, as you have given up the Point in Diſpute Your Charge upon us, (and remember you began it) was want of common Honeſty, for ſaying you worſhipped

worſhipped Images, *made* Gods, *&c.* I prov'd the Practice upon you; you now no longer deny it, but are got to defending it.

A Love of Truth, of you, and of others, however different from me in religious Sentiments, into whoſe Hands this Letter may at ſometime fall, obliges me ſtill to follow you, and to let you ſee how you have impoſed upon yourſelf, or been impoſed on by others, in the Arguments you produce to juſtify your Idolatry.

For the ſake of perſpicuity and eaſe, I will divide your Letter into Parts, and endeavour to anſwer the moſt material Paragraphs by ſo many Sections.

Your Proof is from Scripture, Reaſon, and human Authority. I readily join with you in making theſe the Standard by which we are to judge of the Truth in the preſent Debate.

You begin, where you ſhould do, with Scripture.

I.

Your firſt Argument from thence, is that of *Exod.* 25, *v.* 18, *&c.* 'Thou ſhalt make two 'Cherubims of Gold, of beaten Work ſhalt 'thou make them, in the two Ends of the Mercy 'Seat, *&c.* This you produce to prove *the Making of Images, and that too by the Command of Almighty GOD.* You muſt here mean the Making them for a religious Uſe and Worſhip, or you ſay nothing to the Purpoſe; for this is what we have charged and proved upon you, and what you do not in this Place deny, but defend.

1. Now

1. Now is it not surprizing, that any Man in his Senses, and with his Eyes open, should overlook that of *Exodus* 20, *v.* 4, *&c.* 'Thou 'shalt NOT MAKE to thyself any graven 'Image——Thou shalt not bow down thyself 'to them, nor serve them,'— and yet should find in the same Book, a Command of Almighty GOD to make and keep Images for a religious Use and Worship? Is this the Way to defend Religion; to make the Scriptures inconsistent, and set GOD at Variance with himself? Should a *Jew* hear you talk at this Rate, he would cry out BLASPHEMY *— would glory in his Infidelity, and insult over your Ignorance or Imposition: For my own Part, I am sorry to see any Men, who call themselves CHRISTIANS, reduced to these wretched Shifts, and obliged to abuse GOD's Word in order to defend their own Inventions.

2. THE two Cherubims were made by the especial Command of GOD. Have you any such special Command, or any Command at all for making the Images of CHRIST, the Virgin MARY and the Saints? You may remember,

* This was actually the Case at the great Council of the *Jews*, assembled in the Plain of *Ageda* in *Hungary*, in 1650: When Six of the *Roman* Clergy, affirming the Real Presence of CHRIST in the Sacrament, the religious Observation of their Holy Days, the Invocation of Saints, praying to the Virgin MARY, and her commanding Power in Heaven over her Son, the holy Use of the Cross and Images, *&c.* the Assembly fell into high Clamour against them and their Religion, crying out, *No* CHRIST, *no Woman God, no Intercession of Saints, no worshipping of Images, no praying to the Virgin* MARY, &c. They rent their Cloaths, and cast Dust upon their Heads, and cried aloud, *Blasphemy! Blasphemy!*—— BRETT's *Narrative, annexed to Bishop* CLAYTON *on Prophecy.*

that

that the ſame Authority, which forbids the making of Images, forbids the Committing of Murder: Yet ABRAHAM had a ſpecial Command to ſacrifice his Son: And you may as well, and as conſiſtently with the Commandment, preach up the Lawfulneſs of Murder from the Example of ABRAHAM, † as of Idolatry from that of the Cherubims.

3. It does not appear, that the *Jews* were commanded to worſhip, or did ever worſhip them. In truth they never ſaw them, being not permitted, except the High Prieſt, and that but once a Year, to enter into the Holy of Holies. Your Images are publicly expoſed to the View of the People: Your Churches are full of them: You confeſs in this Letter, that you kiſs them, bow, creep and burn incenſe before them.

4. SUPPOSING that the People did bow towards the Ark, the Holy of Holies and the Cherubims: Was not GOD ſignally there preſent? Did not the Glory of the Lord dwell between (or as the Learned render it, inhabit) the Cherubims? Does any ſuch Glory, as one of your Writers affirms, ſhine forth from your Images? ‡

5. THE Ark, the Cherubims, *&c.* were Parts of the Ceremonial Law of the *Jews*, and a *Fi-*

† I AM ſorry to ſay it, that ſomething of this Kind has been done, under a pretended Zeal for Religion. Upon the Maſſacree of *Vaſſi*, we are told by a *French* Writer and a Bigot of his Church, that the Catholic Preachers declared there was no Cruelty in it; and juſtify'd this bloody Execution by the *ſpecial* Examples of MOSES, JEHU, *&c.* *Memoirs of* MICH. de CASTLENAU, *Lond.* 1724, p. 136, 7.

‡ ARINGHUS in Dr. MIDDLETON's prefat. Diſcourſe to his *Letter from* Rome, *p.* 31.

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gure for the Time then preſent ——Were among *the weak and beggarly Elements*, which were done away by the Spiritual Worſhip of the Goſpel, and annull'd on Account of their Unprofitableneſs, by the more perfect Revelation of JESUS CHRIST: But you, Sir, are for ſtill retaining the Uſages of the *ceremonial*, while you affectedly forget the Precepts of the *moral*, and the ſpiritual Nature of the *Chriſtian* Law.

6. SOME of your own moſt eminent Writers ſeem to have given up this Paſſage of ſacred Writ, as impertinent or inſufficient to the Purpoſe for which you have produced it. DUPIN tells us, that the Biſhops in the ſecond Council of *Nice*, 'inſiſted upon this Proof, and *pretended* 'that the Cherubims had humane Faces, and 'that the Uſe of Images is thus eſtabliſhed in 'the Old Teſtament.' But what were the Sentiments of this learned Hiſtorian upon this Text? 'I leave you to judge,' ſays he, 'whe-'ther That be a ſufficient Proof.‖' And, I believe, you will find your angelic Doctor THOMAS AQUINAS aſſerting, that the Cherubims were not placed in the Tabernacle to have divine Worſhip paid them §.

II.

YOU produce the Serpent of Braſs, or fiery Serpent from *Numbers* 21, *v.* 8, 9, to juſtify your making and keeping of Images.

1. I DO not find one Word in the Hiſtory of the Brazen Serpent, importing that it was

‖ Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of the 8th Cent. *p.* 135.
§ AQUIN. Prima ſecundæ, Qu. 102. Art. 4, p. 6.

worſhiped, or commanded ſo to be. You ſay, 'It was commanded by GOD himſelf, and probably highly eſteemed, at leaſt by thoſe it 'cured.' Now to vindicate yourſelves it behoves you to ſhew, that your Images are Commanded by GOD himſelf, and cure thoſe who look on them; and then you may have ſome better Plea for your Eſteem of them.

2. THE Hiſtory of the brazen Serpent is ſo far from juſtifying your Cauſe, that it makes directly againſt it; for we find that King HEZEKIAH brake in Pieces This among other Images; and, as it ſhould ſeem, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe it was worſhiped, 'For unto thoſe 'Days the Children of *Iſrael* did burn Incenſe 'to it, and he called it *Nehaſhtan**.'

THUS then ſtands the Logic of your Argument from this Scripture: The *Jews* might *not* worſhip a Picture, Image or Repreſentation of a Serpent; therefore the Romaniſts *may* worſhip Pictures, Images and Repreſentations. King HEZEKIAH commanded Images to be *deſtroy'd*; therefore Pope PIUS might command them to be *worſhiped*.

Dr. FULK ſeems to have ſet this Part of the ſacred Story in a true Light. 'The brazen Serpent,' ſays he, 'firſt and laſt was an Image; 'holy, when it was commanded by GOD to be 'made a Sacrament of our Redemption by 'CHRIST; lawful, when it was reſerved only 'for Memory of that excellent Miracle; unlaw-

* 2 Kings 18, v. 4.

'ful,

'ful, curſed and abominable, when it was wor-
'ſhiped, and therefore juſtly broken in Pieces
'by the godly King EZEKIAS †.'

To the ſame Purpoſe TERTULLIAN had long before obſerv'd, that the brazen Serpent was made 'not as an Image of Idolatry, but as a Fi-
'gure of their Remedy; not in derogation of the
'Law, but as a Figure of the Croſs ‡.' And thus JUSTIN MARTYR: 'It was a Figure of
'the bleſſed JESUS, who was to ſave us from
'the Biting of the Old Serpent; for otherwiſe
'how can we reconcile it with the Command of
'the ſame GOD to make no Kind of Image ||?

III.

BUT it ſeems in 1 *Chron.* 28, *v.* 18, you find *an Altar of Incenſe, and Cherubims ſpreading out their Wings*, &c.

1. PRAY, Sir, do not you find in the ſame Chapter, and commanded by the ſame Authority, *the Pattern of the Porch, and of the Houſes,*——*and of the Treaſuries*——*and of the upper Chambers*——*and of the inner Parlours,*——*and of the Place of the Mercy Seat*——*and for all the Veſſels of Service in the Houſe of the Lord*——*and Gold for the Tables of Shew Bread*——*and alſo pure Gold for the Fleſh-hooks*, &c? Does not your Argument here prove a great deal too much, and imply the Neceſſity, or at leaſt the Lawfulneſs of the Temple Service, under the Chriſtian Diſputation?

† Defence of the *Engliſh* Tranſlations of the Bible, *p.* 37.
‡ Lib. de Idolatria, *c.* 5.
|| See Preſervat. againſt Popery, Tit. 6. *p.* 265.

2. BUT *all this*, ſaith DAVID, *the Lord made me to underſtand in Writing by his Hand upon me.* *v.* 19; and it is further ſaid, that he had the Pattern of all *by the Spirit.* *v.* 12. Now, Sir, to make this Scripture anſwer to your Purpoſe, you muſt ſhew that Pope PIUS had *by the Spirit* the Pattern of the Houſe of the Lord——; and that 'the Lord made him to underſtand in Wri-'ting by his Hand upon him, all the Works of 'this Pattern.' Pleaſe, Sir, to ſpecify the hiſtorical Record, where I may find this Revelation made to his Holineſs, or the Fathers of the *Nicene* Council, of a Pattern of GOD's Houſe, to be finiſhed by their Succeſſors.

IV.

'BUT JOSHUA,' you ſay, 'and all the 'Elders of *Iſrael* fell to the Earth upon their 'Faces before the Ark——out of Reſpect to it. 'Jos. 7. *v.* 6.

1. SIR, you ſhould know that the Ark is commonly called *the Ark of the Lord* and *the Ark of* GOD: ——was made by his ſpecial Command, *Exod.* 25; and the Cloud, which at firſt filled the whole Tabernacle, afterwards reſided on this Ark of the Teſtimony, with a great Luſtre, ſhining from between the Cherubims: ——A manifeſt Indication of GOD's majeſtic Preſence! Can you, Sir, ſay all, or any Thing like this of your Images?

2. JOSHUA's Addreſs in this Poſture of Humiliation was not to the Ark, or any Imagery that belonged to it; but directly to GOD, *v.* 7. *And* JOSHUA *ſaid*; *Alas O Lord* GOD!——*Would to* GOD!

God!——*O Lord, what ſhall I ſay.* Your Practice is but the direct Contrary: You addreſs the Croſs, the Virgin *Mary*, *&c.* before whoſe Images you proſtrate and adore.

V.

Your next Argument from Scripture is the Example of the ſame Joshua, who *put off his Shoe* out of Reſpect to the Holy Land, ſay you, *as the Angel bad him.*

Now there are a few material Differences between your Conduct and Joshua's.

1. Here was a ſpecial Divine Appearance; —the Captain or Prince of the Hoſt of the Lord, before whom Joshua fell on his Face to the Earth, and did Worſhip. Have your Images any ſuch Signatures of Divinity about them? He had before him a living Exhibition of heavenly Splendor: Your Images are dead Matter, the Labour of human Art.

2. The Earth was no Image or Repreſentation of any Thing holy, but was made ſacred by the divine Preſence: You worſhip Images or Repreſentations not made ſacred by any Divine Preſence.

3. Joshua put off his Shoe by an expreſs divine Command: You worſhip Images, contrary to a direct Prohibition from God.

VI.

'But was not,' ſay you, 'Jacob a 'grievous Idolator (*i. e.* upon Proteſtant Prin-'ciples) by adoring the Top of Joseph's Rod?' And here you refer me to the *Latin* Vulgate.

Really

REALLY, Sir, you amaze me: I did not expect this Arrow from your Magazine of Artillery provided for the Defence of holy Church. I had it indeed in my Eye, when I writ to you laſt; and as this Text, I mean the Tranſlation you refer to, was publiſh'd by the Authority of the Popes SIXTUS the Fifth and CLEMENT the Eighth, it ſeemed a ſufficient Warrant to charge you with countenancing the Worſhip of Images. But when I look'd into an eſtabliſhed Book of yours, *The Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine, c.* 9, where are to be ſeen moſt of your other Arguments in Defence of Image-Worſhip, and I found this omitted, I imagin'd you had been aſhamed of it, and ſo would not preſs you with a Proof, which you ſeemed to have renounced. The Author of *The Grounds, &c.* probably thought, that the Authority of your Popes might be called in queſtion by urging this Tranſlation, as the genuine Senſe of the Original, and ſo wiſely declined it: He might conceive that it would reflect upon Infallibility to draw it into the Debate, as authorizing Falſhood; and that Holineſs itſelf might not eſcape without Reproach, when catch'd in publiſhing a Lie. But you, Sir, are reſolved to go through with your Work, regardleſs of Conſequences, and undiſtinguiſhingly apply every rotten Buttreſs that has but the Appearance of a Prop, to ſupport your Church, tho' it ſhakes the Foundation, and manifeſtly threatens the whole Fabrick. I muſt therefore follow you whither you have drawn me.

I. YOUR

1. YOUR Tranſlation is falſe, and conſequently the Authority that eſtabliſhes it is fallible, and the Argument drawn from it inconcluſive. You have left out the Prepoſition ἐπὶ, which ſignifies in this Place *upon* or *toward*. Now to bow *upon* or *towards* a Staff, can in no fair Conſtruction imply, that the Perſon ſo bowing worſhips the Staff: Or will you ſay that when ABRAHAM *bowed himſelf toward the Ground**, the Patriarch *worſhip'd* the Ground? You may remember that the primitive Chriſtians worſhiped GOD *towards the Eaſt*; and that the Heathens thence took Occaſion to accuſe them of Worſhiping the riſing Sun: Will you, Sir, join the Cry, and from this Circumſtance of bowing towards the Eaſt, ſay, that primitive Chriſtianity was guilty of *Pagan* Idolatry?

2. THO' your deſign'd Omiſſion in this Place cannot be juſtified, yet our Addition may. Our Tranſlators, like honeſt Men, have the Word *leaning* in *Italics*, to tell the Reader, that it is not in the Original. At the ſame Time we muſt defend the Supplemental Word, as moſt agreeable to the Senſe of the ſacred Text, 'till you give us a better.

3. YOUR Tranſlation is not only not agreeable to the Original, but does Injury to the Patriarch's Character. *He adored the Top of his Rod.* Pray, Sir, is this Circumſtance of JACOB's Worſhiping his Rod or Staff any Argument of his Faith in GOD, or worthy the being thus particularly taken notice of by the Holy Ghoſt? But it appears to me a very natural Picture, and a

* προσεκύνησεν ἐπὶ τὸν γλῶ. *Gen.* 18. 2.

con-

convincing Proof of the Strength of ISRAEL's Faith, that he, very old and very weak, being now a dying Man, ſhould rowze himſelf ſo far as to be able, with the Help of a Staff, or leaning upon it, to bow himſelf in token of Adoration at his Bleſſing the Sons of JOSEPH. The Bowing or Worſhiping might very naturally be an outward Expreſſion of his inward Thankfulneſs and pious Gratitude to GOD, upon the Recollection of his paſt Mercies, or the Proſpect of the future Bleſſings promiſed to his Race: —— Or it might be the Poſture of a ſhort Prayer for their ſpeedy accompliſhment: But that JACOB *worſhiped the Top of his Staff* † (as if

† SIR, I never before met with what you ſo juſtly remark of the abſurd Tranſlation of *Heb.* 11, v. 21. προσεκυνησεν ἐπὶ τὸ ἄκρον τῆ ῥάβδε αὐτῦ. into the Latin *et adoravit faſtigium virgæ ejus*, as the Vulgate hath it. This I am well aſſured, St. JEROM was too ſtanch againſt all Idolatry to have been the Author of: Yet I think they call the Vulgate Latin St. JEROM's Verſion. The *Greek* Text itſelf I can hardly approve (tho' the inſpired Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* has, by uſing it, given it ſomehow the Sanction of Divine Authority) as it is the Septuagint's falſe Verſion of *Geneſis* 47, v. 31, where the *Hebrew* is: וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־רֹאשׁ הַמִּטָּה *and* ISRAEL *bowed down upon the Head of the Bed*: which the *Greek* Interpreters neglecting the Points rendred as if it had been הַמַּטֶּה (ῆ ῥάβδε) adding the Relative αὐτῦ which is not in the *Hebrew*. And from this falſe *Greek* the Infallible Church (as what cannot Infallibility do!) has cook'd up a Divine Authority for Worſhiping Images; as if the dying Patriarch had worſhip'd ſome little *Egyptian* Teraph, form'd on the Head of JOSEPH's Staff. The Targum of Onkelos hath it in the *Chaldaic* exactly to the *Hebrew* וּסְגִיד יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־רֵישׁ עָרְסָא where the *Chaldaic* Word עָרְסָא is quite different from חוּטְרָא the Word for a Staff uſed in the *Chaldee* of *Exodus* 4, v. 2. and ſo could not be ſubſtituted for the other, and this condemns the *Greek* ῥάβδε. Nay the Vulgate Latin hath *converſus ad Lectuli caput*; which (ſuppoſing St. JEROM the Author of that Verſion) is a pretty ſtrong Argument of his having had the Pointed *Hebrew*, as he was very careful not to leave the *Greek* but when forced by the Propriety of the *Hebrew*.'

N. B. *The learned Reader is indebted for this curious Remark to Mr.* P. WHITFIELD; *who at my Requeſt allowed it to be publiſhed.*

it

it had been ſome little *Egyptian* Teraph) after all the ſignal Bleſſings he had received from Heaven, is a moſt ſad Proof of Patriarchal Faith and Religion; and I cannot but wonder, that any Gentleman of Piety and Learning, or even common Senſe, can practice Image-Worſhip, and preach in defence of it, upon ſuch wretched Pretences, in Defiance of an expreſs Command, and the ſevereſt Denunciations of GOD by the Mouth of MOSES and the ſucceeding Prophets, again and again repeated.

PRAY, Sir, when your Hand was in, why did you not give us RACHAEL's ſtealing her Father LABAN's Gods? (What a venerable Antiquity too was here?) Or the ſix hundred Men of the Children of DAN going off with MICAH's Ephod and Teraphim and the graven Image? Theſe had been as much to your Purpoſe as JACOB's Rod, which we know not was either Image or Object of Worſhip.

4. I WOULD further obſerve to you, that Pope ADRIAN in his Letter in Defence of Image-Worſhip, read and ratified by the Council of *Nice*, quotes this very Text as it is read in our Tranſlation: 'JACOB Worſhiped *on* the Top 'of his Staff;' and tho' he differs from us in expounding it of JOSEPH's Staff, yet he adds, *that it was not the Staff he worſhiped.* ‡ Here, Sir, let me ask you, which of theſe Popes was moſt infallible?—ADRIAN who quoted the Text honeſtly, tho' he expounded it badly, and ap-

‡ Act. 2. *p.* 107, 6.

ply'd it to a bad Purpoſe?— or SIXTUS and CLEMENT, who have authoriz'd Falſhood, and patroniz'd Forgery to the ſame Purpoſe?

VII.

BUT if this will not ſuit me, you have it ſeems what will; *viz.* SOLOMON's *and all the Congregation of* Iſrael's *ſacrificing Sheep and Oxen without number before the Ark:* And you refer me to 2 *Chron.* 5. 6.

1. HERE you are got again to the Temple-Service and ceremonial Law; both long ſince aboliſh'd. Or,

2. IF this Text is a juſtification of your Cauſe and of your Practice, it proves too much; —— requires your Hecatombs ſlain before your Images, as they were before the Altar. But I conceive that Sacrifice was not a relative Honour, or inferior Reſpect; which is all that you pretend in this Letter to plead for, to be paid to your Images.

3. THE Sacrifice was made not *to* but *before* the Ark. Here is not any religious Worſhip paid to it, except you will ſay and inſiſt, that this Sacrifice was to the Ark and not to GOD. But if you will look at the Remainder of this and the next Chapter, you will find, that the whole ſolemn Service was here directed immediately to GOD. Why did you not rather quote 2 SAM. 6. v. 15, 16, where DAVID and all the Houſe of *Iſrael* are deſcribed, as bringing up the Ark of the Lord with ſhouting and with the Sound of the Trumpet? In truth, neither in this

this Place was the *Wooden Machine*, as you call it, any Object of Worſhip. DAVID was ſeen leaping and dancing, but it was *before the Lord.*

I WOULD but further obſerve to you, as you have appealed to Scripture in juſtification of Image-Worſhip, 1. That there is not one Sin in the Law and the Prophets more ſtrictly, more frequently forbidden than Idolatry; as if this was a Sin to which humane Nature would be moſt liable, and the Devil moſt apt to tempt Mankind. 2. That the Commandment on this Subject is expreſſed in Terms the moſt comprehenſive, ſo as to exclude all Manner of Pretext, or excuſe for the Violation; GOD's omniſcient Spirit foreſeeing the Artifice that would be made uſe of, and the Diſtinctions framed to palliate this Sin and recommend it to the World. 3. That the Worſt of the Gentile Nations that GOD caſt out and deſtroyed, and the Worſt of Tyrants in the Old Teſtament, were branded for this Crime. 4. That under the new Diſpenſation, the Temple of GOD is ſuppoſed to have no Agreement with Idols; and that the Worſhip of them is rank'd with the Worſhip of Devils, with Murder and the Worſt of Crimes, *Revel.* 9. *v.* 20; and you might as effectually prove the Lawfulneſs of theſe as of that from holy Scripture. 5. That the Judgments inflicted upon the *Jews* for their Idolatry, were intended as an Example and a Leſſon to all Ages and Nations, to deter them from the ſame Crimes. *Ezek.* 16, *v.* 41.—23, *v.* 48.

So much for your Proofs from Scripture. I now expected, according to the Method of Argumentation

gumentation you ſet out with, that we ſhould have had your Proofs from Reaſon. But you have forgot yourſelf; or, conſcious that what was ſo expreſly forbidden by Religion, could never be maintained upon the Principles of Reaſon, you are deſignedly ſilent. However I follow you in your own Way.

VIII.

You proceed, 'Are not your Common-Prayer 'Books full of the Images of CHRIST and his 'Saints; deſign'd, I hope, for no other End than 'Ornament and Inſtruction?'

1. THE Images, as you call them, of CHRIST and his Saints are not printed, that ever I heard of, by any Authority of the Church of *England*, or commanded *to be had and retained; and that due Honour and Veneration is to be given them.*

2. OUR People do not, that ever I ſaw or heard of, kneel to them, kiſs them, pray to them, or burn Incenſe before them.

3. WHAT may be retained for no other End than Ornament and Inſtruction, differs very widely from That, which is made the Object of Worſhip or Veneration.

4. YOUR Inſinuation here, that your Images are (like our Pictures) *for no other End than Ornament and Inſtruction*, is contrary to the eſtabliſhed and received Doctrine of your Church, and the avowed Sentiments of your moſt eminent Writers. CLAUDIUS, you muſt know, one of the ancient Biſhops of *Turin*, wrote againſt Image-Worſhip;

Worſhip; and JONAS Biſhop of *Orleans* undertook to anſwer him: He anſwered him in your Way. 'But of the Catholic Church' (ſays your great BARONIUS) 'JONAS merited not by his 'anſwer; for he defended Images in the Church 'as deſigned only for Ornament, and to inſtruct 'the People in Hiſtory, and not for Veneration.*

IX.

BUT Biſhop MONTAGUE, it ſeems, is on your Side: —— 'A Proteſtant Biſhop, and one 'whom you fancy the Church of *England* eſteems 'of equal Authority with the Curate and myſelf.'

BE decent, Sir, and keep your Temper: Your Paſſion betrays you, and expoſes both you and your Cauſe.

1. NEITHER my Brother's nor my Authority was once mentioned in the Cauſe. That he might ſay, and ſay conſiſtently with his Character as a Clergyman of the Church of *England*, that you worſhiped Images, I did aſſert; and told you that the general Current of our Divines ſaid the ſame Thing. I particularly mentioned the Names of BARROW, STILLINGFLEET, TILLOTSON and BULL. Now would you ſay any Thing to the Purpoſe, you ſhould ſay, that the Church of *England* eſteems MONTAGUE of equal Authority with BARROW, STILLINGFLEET, TILLOTSON and BULL.

* JONAS ad Ornatum duntaxat et ad inſtruendum de rebus geſtis fideles non autem ad Venerationem eſſe debere Imagines in Eccleſia ſenſit; eumque cum aliis ejuſdem ſectæ Gregalibus ſuperius confutavimus.
BARON. ad ann. 825.

2. I MIGHT acquaint you, that this Prelate was not in his Time eſteemed of any great Authority on this Subject, by either Church or State;——that he was for his Writings admoniſhed by the Arch-Biſhop;——that the Committee for Religion, upon examining two of his Books, reported to the Houſe the falſe, erroneous, *papiſtical* Opinions found therein;——and that one of his Books in particular was voted contrary to the Articles of the Church of *England*, and tending to the Diſturbance of Church and State:——I might acquaint you that he was publicly attack'd by the Writers of his Time, as a Maintainer of Arminianiſm and *Popery* †.——But I confeſs to you freely, that I believe he had hard Meaſure; that he deſerved better Treatment than he received, and that he ſuffered in common with other honeſt Men, by the Faction and Curſe of the Times. He might be imprudent, but I hope he was ingenuous: He had ſome Singularities in Opinion that look favourably on Popery, yet I am perſuaded he was no Papiſt. Let us then take things at the beſt;——let his Character be allow'd, and his Authority be admitted as weighty as you pleaſe, and ſee what you will get by it.

3. IN the Epiſtle Dedicatory to one of his Books ‡ (a Book which none of your Party has been, or ever will be, able to anſwer) he 'concludes it a Point of plain Folly, if no more, for

† WHITLOCK and RAPIN; and ſee YATES's *Ibis ad Ceſarem*. Lond. 1626.

‡ Immediate Addreſs unto GOD alone, *Lond.* 1624; or, a Treatiſe on the Invocation of Saints.

'any

'any Man to implore the Help of others, to uſe 'Advocates and Aſſiſtants unto GOD in any exi-'gence, Time of Need, or Neceſſity, who is 'ſo directed, counſelled, and invited by GOD 'himſelf to immediate Acceſs, without Media-'tion, in *Call upon me*:—Of Folly and ridiculous 'Abſurdity, as it is by them conceived, taught 'and laid down; even by the moſt learned, judi-'cious and adviſed amongſt them: Though I 'know, in Point of Practice and Performance, 'the ſimple, vulgar People, not acquainted with, 'nor capable of ſcholaſtical Nicities or Difference 'in Terms, of Invocation and Advocation, Help 'original and derived, go to it down-right with 'direct Addreſs indeed, unto flat Impietie againſt 'GOD, and Idolatrie in their ordinary Devotion 'unto the Creature.'

IN the Body of the Book he ſays, 'The 'Church of *Rome* having loſt her firſt Love—— 'hath proſtituted her Devotions:——As a com-'mon Strumpet, giveth Entertainment to any 'Commoner promiſcuouſly; ſo hath ſhe alſo di-'vided her *Call* in her Devotions to every one 'that paſſeth by; each Saint hath a Part:——She 'hath many Addreſſes unto many Mediators, for 'Acceſſe and Audience; for Diſpatch and Rid-'dance at GOD's Hands, to be heard and delive-'red in Time of Trouble; few or none immedi-'ate To or By himſelf *.'

ONE Quotation more, from another of his Books, I will give you, and deſire you to apply

* Invocation of Saints. p. 57.

it,

it, and take it as an anſwer to ſome other Parts of your Letter. 'But whatſoever you ſay, or 'howſoever you qualify the Thing with gentle 'Words, we ſay, in your Practice you far exceed; 'and give them [Images] that Honour which 'is *Latria*, a Part of divine Reſpect and Wor-'ſhip.'——And afterwards, 'The People go to 'it with down-right Adoration, and your new 'Schools defend, that the ſame Reſpect is due 'to the Repreſenter, as muſt be given to the 'Repreſentee: So that the Crucifix is to be 'reverenced with the ſelf-ſame Honour that 'JESUS CHRIST is: A Blaſpemy not heard of 'till THOMAS AQUINAS ſet it on Foot †.'

X.

YOU next refer me to 'The Proteſtant *French* 'Catechiſm, to Mr. THORNDIKE, and the Prac-'tice of the Lutherans.'

1. WITH the firſt and the laſt I have nothing to do: My former Letter, if you recollect, was to vindicate Mr. *H.* as a Miniſter of the Proteſtant Church of *England*.

2. AND as to Mr. THORNDIKE he was but one Man, whoſe Opinion, ſuppoſe it favours you, is not to over-rule the conſtant Judgment of our Church, and the uniform Sentiments of our moſt eminent Biſhops and Divines, ſince the Time of the Reformation. Or, will you allow that the Faith and Practice of what you call the Catholic Church, are diſcredited by the private Opinions

† Anſwer to the Gagg. p. 319.

of

of one particular Author or two of your Communion? Not one, but many, and thoſe of eminent Learning and Parts, of your Perſuaſion, have oppoſed and condemned Image-Worſhip; and this, too, long after it was eſtabliſhed by the Council of *Nice*. Will you allow that this ſets aſide the Acts of your Councils, the Decrees of your Popes, the conſtant Doctrine and allow'd Practice of your Church, and the Sentiments of your other Divines?

I HAVE not Mr. THORNDIKE's Book, which you refer to, by me; ſo cannot tell how he may have qualified the Quotation you give me from it. But it appears from his Sentiments delivered a little before his Death, when it may be preſumed he ſpoke from his Soul, that he was no Friend to your Church in General, nor to your Practice in Particular, the Subject of our preſent Debate.

'THERE is,' ſays he, 'neither Scripture nor 'Tradition for praying to Saints departed, nor 'any Evidence that they hear our Prayers.

'THEREFORE it evidences a carnal Hope, 'that GOD will abate of the Covenant of our 'Baptiſm, which is the Condition of our Sal-'vation, for their ſakes.

'To pray to them for thoſe Things, which 'only GOD can give (as *all* Papiſts do) is by the 'proper Senſe of their Words, down-right Ido-'latry.

'IF they ſay their Meaning is by a Figure, 'only to deſire them to procure their Requeſts 'to GOD; how dare any Chriſtian truſt his

'Soul with that Church, which teaches that 'which muſt be Idolatry in all that underſtand 'not the Figure?

'THERE is neither Scripture nor Tradition for 'Worſhiping the Croſs, the Images and Reliques 'of Saints.

'THEREFORE it evidences the ſame carnal 'Hope, that GOD will abate of his Goſpel for 'ſuch Bribes: Which is the Will-Worſhip of 'Maſſes, Pilgrimages and Indulgencies to that 'Purpoſe ‡.'

So that, upon the Whole, the Diſſentions of our moſt eminent Divines, upon this Subject, are not ſo remarkable as you would make them: Not one of them it ſeems, not your favourite MONTAGUE nor THORNDIKE acquitting you of Idolatry.

XI.

BUT notwithſtanding this, we muſt be eſteemed, 'divided in Hearts and Tongues, like the Builders 'of *Babel*, quite deſtitute of *Unity*, a diſtinctive 'Mark of the true Church.'

VERY modeſtly indeed, and logically concluded from the Premiſes. All our moſt eminent Divines, not one excepted, *agree* in Charging the Church of *Rome* with Idolatry: *Ergo*, they all *diſagree*.

1. BUT this Objection of Want of Unity very ill becomes you, or at leaſt ſome of your Frater-

‡ HICK's Collection of Controverſial Tracts. Vol. 1. Appendix.

nity;

nity; who, 'tis generally reported, have been moſt aſſiduous in raiſing and promoting our Diviſions, and under borrowed Names and Characters have driven our different Parties in Religion to extremes. You may be bely'd in this Charge upon you; but when it is notorious that ſome of your Church have been moſt Inſtrumental in raiſing Faction and fomenting Rebellion in the State, it requires a large Degree of Faith to believe you have wiſhed well to the Peace, or not promoted the Diviſions of the Church.

2. If the *Romaniſts* are more at unity among themſelves than the Proteſtants, let us conſider the Reaſons of it, and we may poſſibly find, that they reflect no Glory on your Cauſe, or on your Church. Your Eccleſiaſtical Polity is ſo framed as to ſuit all Humours. None have Reaſon to diſſent, where all may in their ſeveral Ways be obliged. The Reſerved may have their Cloiſters; the Licentious their Stews; the elevated and raiſed may have Rules of high Perfection; the Abandon'd and groſs, Indulgencies and Pardons. You have Proceſſions and Ceremonies to ſet the Mob agaze; you have Miracles for the Simple and credulous; Viſions for the Phantaſtical, and Reliques and Images for the Superſtitious *.

The Number of your Convents in Particular has been juſtly thought to contribute not a little to leſſen the Number of your Sects. 'They 'are,' ſays a fine Writer, who took his Obſervations upon the Spot, 'ſo many Receptacles for

* See Sir Edw. Sandys's Europæ Speculum. p. 37, &c.

'all

'all thoſe firey Zealots, who would ſet the 'Church in a Flame, were they not got together 'in theſe Houſes of Devotion. All Men of dark 'Tempers, according to their Degree of Melan-'cholly and Enthuſiaſm, may find Convents fitted 'to their Humours, and meet with Companions 'as gloomy as themſelves. So that what the 'Proteſtant would call a Fanatic, is in the *Ro-'man* Church a Religious of ſuch or ſuch an 'Order†.'

To this I may add, that the holy Houſe of Inquiſition (which you know to be a ſpecial Engine of Eccleſiaſtical Tyranny, ſet up in ſome of the Popiſh Countries) is a moſt excellent Expedient to ſettle all Scruples, and by precluding all Freedom of Speech, Debate and Enquiry, moſt admirably and effectually preſerves the Peace of the Church: For what Heretic can reſiſt the rational Conviction of a Priſon and Tortures?

And where a milder Genius preſides in the Councils of other Kingdoms of the *Romiſh* Perſuaſion, yet the Reſtraints upon the Preſs, and the Examinations which every Book is ſubject to before, and the Cenſures it is liable to after Publication, muſt go a great Way towards ſtifling every Thought, and pruning every Expreſſion that might ſeem to reflect on the Church Eſtabliſhment, or diſſent from the current Orthodoxy.

3. But notwithſtanding all theſe Means of Policy and Power, to preſerve Unity of Doctrine

† Mr. Addison's Travels p. 224.

and

and Uniformity in Practice, the Church of *Rome* is not at Unity in itſelf, and therefore does but with an ill Grace object Diſſentions to others. You know, Sir, that your great Corner-Stone the INFALLIBILITY is not agreed upon; while ſome place it in the Pope, ſome in a general Council, ſome in both, and ſome in neither; ſome in the Pope and a provincial Council; ſome in the Pope and a Conclave of Cardinals; and ſome in none of theſe, but in the Church Univerſal, or the Company of all faithful People.

BESIDES this Difference of Sentiment about your Head, have you never heard of any Diviſions among your Members upon other Subjects; as between the Jeſuits and Seculars, Dominicans and Franciſcans, Janſeniſts and Moliniſts?

BE pleaſed, Sir, to call to mind your Diſſentions upon the preſent Subject. The Council of *Eliberis* in *Spain*, and that of *Conſtantinople* called by CONSTANTINE CAPRONYMUS, condemn'd the Worſhip of Images: The Council of *Nice* afterwards eſtabliſh'd it: The Council of *Franckfort* after this condemns it, as does the Council of *Mentz*: The Council of *Trent* again re-eſtabliſh'd it. The Words of DUPIN, concerning the Conduct of the Church upon this Subject are ſomewhat remarkable. 'In the Weſt,' ſays he, 'ſome Biſhops at firſt would not ſuffer any I-'mages; but the greater Part agreed, that they 'might be of ſome uſe, and only hindered them 'from being Honoured. But the Worſhiping of 'Images being eſtabliſh'd in the Eaſt, was alſo receiv'd

'received at *Rome*; whilſt in *France*, *Germany* 'and *England* all outward Worſhiping of them 'was unknown.'

To heal the Reflection which the Proteſtant Reader might be apt to make upon this Occaſion, obſerve how the Sorbon Doctor cooks up the Matter: 'This Difference,' ſays he, 'did not 'occaſion any Diviſion among the Churches:' *i. e.* They were divided without any Difference, and at perfect Unity, tho' in direct Oppoſition.

It is further well known, that Gregory the Great, Serenus Biſhop of *Marſeilles*, Agobardus Biſhop of *Lyons*, and others of later Times, whoſe diſtinguiſh'd Parts and Learning have done Honour to your Church, have expreſs'd their Diſlike and Deteſtation of all Image-Worſhip; while Pope Adrian, Pope Pius the Fifth, Naclantus Biſhop of *Clugium*, Bellarmine and Thomas Aquinas have ſtrenuouſly aſſerted and maintained it.

Again, among thoſe who, with the Council of *Trent*, agree that due Honour and Veneration is to be given to Images, there ariſes a new Diſpute, what is this due Honour and Veneration; while ſome ſay it is *Latria*, others *Dulia*; ſome *Latria* relative, others *Latria* abſolute: Some tell us, that the Image itſelf muſt not in any Manner be worſhiped, but only the Exemplar before the Image; others ſay, that the ſame Honour is due to the Image as to the Exemplar; and others, that the Images themſelves ought to be worſhiped;

ed; but with a leſſer Honour than the Exemplar, or Prototype.

THUS, Sir, you have upon this Subject alone, Writer againſt Writer, Biſhop againſt Biſhop, Church againſt Church, Council againſt Council, and Pope againſt Pope.

THERE was indeed no occaſion to recur to Hiſtory of Times paſt to obſerve your Diviſions. Look, Sir, into the preſent State of *France*, and ſay, Are the *Romaniſts* one Heart and one Tongue?

BUT I need not dwell longer on this Subject, which is exhauſted by Biſhop STILLINGFLEET in the fifth Chapter of his *Diſcourſe concerning the Idolatry practiſed in the Church of* Rome. In this Chapter the excellent Writer hath ſhewn, 'that 'there have never been greater Diſturbances in 'the Chriſtian World, than what you call the 'Means of Unity, *viz.* the Pope's Authority 'hath procured; no where greater or more 'laſting Schiſms; no where fiercer Diſputes a-'bout Matters of Order and Doctrine, than among 'you.' So that, by your own Principles, if *Unity* is a diſtinctive Mark of the true Church, you neither are, nor have been, that Church.

4. AFTER all, ſhould we allow, that you did agree in all Points wherein you differ from us, or in the additional Articles of Pope PIUS's Creed, ſhould we envy your Unity, and admire the Harmony of your holy Church? Or ſhould we not more juſtly deteſt it, as an unchriſtian Confederacy againſt the Goſpel and Truth of GOD?

XII.

XII.

I NOW receive your Compliments 'for tracing the Use of Images so far back as the *Nicene* 'Council; as you think it does no great Honour 'to our Cause; being a plain Demonstration, that 'the Use of Images subsisted so many hundred 'Years before the Reformation, and consequently 'before our Church had any visible Existence in 'the Universe: I did not, it seems, consider the 'Consequence.'

IT is best, Sir, always to speak Truth, and to leave Consequences to shift for themselves: You may soon enough see where the Consequence will fall.

1. ERROR in Opinion, or Falshood in Doctrine, or Folly and Impiety in Practice, are not more justifiable or defensible for being *old*. If they were, ancient Paganism should still take Place, and Christianity has no Title to our Preference and Acceptance. Or had you liv'd in the more early Ages of the Church, would you have join'd the Cry with JULIAN and other Enemies of the Cross of CHRIST, and rejected our most holy Religion as *false*, because *novel?*

2. BUT in Truth (suppose we Antiquity the Test and Record of Truth) Antiquity is not on your Side. When you preach of the *ancient Church*, and your poor, ignorant People (whom I heartily pity) place a Merit, and boast themselves, in being of the *old Religion*, you may mutually deceive and be deceiv'd without Contradiction. But, for your own sake, Sir, you had

had beſt, when you enter into Controverſy with thoſe of our Church, who know any thing of the pure Ages of Primitive Chriſtianity, never mention Antiquity. You cannot but know (and I wonder much how Gentlemen of Learning can reconcile this Knowledge with their Practice) that the Fathers and early Writers of the Church are all againſt you in the moſt material Articles, wherein you differ from the Church of *England*. The Biſhop of *Rome*'s Supremacy and Infallibility, Tranſubſtantiation, Communion in one Kind, ſeven Sacraments, the Doctrine of Merit, and Works of Supererogation, the Worſhip and Invocation of Saints and Angels, Scriptures and Prayers in an unknown Tongue, are clean contrary to the Practice and Doctrine of the primitive Church, and the moſt ancient Chriſtian Writers; and were not eſtabliſh'd till ſome Hundred Years after CHRIST.

THE Practice of Image-Worſhip (our preſent Subject) was eſtabliſhed by the ſecond Council of *Nice*: *i. e.* between ſeven and eight hundred Years after CHRIST; for I think the Empreſs-Regent IRENE is ſuppoſed to have called this Council in the Year 786. Now ſhould it appear that Image-Worſhip was not practiſed or eſtabliſh'd,——was exclaim'd againſt, and univerſally condemn'd, by the more early Writers of the Church, and that the Fathers of the ſecond, third and fourth Centuries both preach'd and writ againſt all Uſe of Images in the Service of GOD, and declared it deſtructive of all true Religion,

——what becomes of your boaſted Antiquity to juſtify this Practice? If you claim a Right to your *Wooden Machines* from the Poſſeſſion of *nine*, with what Face can you object to our Diſclaiming that Right from the Authority of *fifteen* or *ſixteen* hundred Years? If Antiquity alone proves you are in the Right, a greater Antiquity muſt be allow'd it's Weight, tho' it proves you are in the Wrong.

4. That you may not ſay we here beg the Queſtion, and aſſert without Proof, I will give you the Authority of ſuch of the Fathers as I have by me; and for your further Satisfaction could wiſh you would peruſe the ſecond Part of the Homily againſt the Peril of Idolatry.

1. St. Chrysostom flouriſh'd about the Year 400. In his Commentary upon thoſe Words of Isaiah, *Their Land alſo is full of Idols*, he tells us, that the Prophet forbids, 'to make any I-'mage:' Where, by the Way, I would obſerve, that the Tranſlator, a Carthuſian Monk, has render'd the *Greek* ἐξεικόνισμα ποιῆσαι depingerent *Imaginem*. Carysostom afterwards calls every Idol (πᾶν εἴδωλον) an Abomination to be hated and utterly deteſted.

It is ſomething remarkable, that the Father, in Commenting on the former Verſe, 'Their 'Land alſo is full of Silver and Gold, neither is 'there any End of their Treaſures: Their Land 'alſo is full of Horſes, neither is there any End 'of their Chariots,' tells us, that the Prophet did not blame the *Uſe* of Horſes, of Wealth and Power, but the *Abuſe* of them: But here, tho'

Isaiah

Isaiah makes uſe of the ſame Form of Words, and continues his Exclamation againſt the Wickedneſs of the Land, yet Chrysostom makes no Diſtinction between the Uſe and Abuſe of Idols: But *every Idol*, ſays he, is an Abomination *.

In another Place, † mentioning the Beginning and Root of Idolatry, he aſcribes it to the extraordinary Opinion conceiv'd by the People of thoſe Heroes of Antiquity, who fought ſucceſsfully, erected Trophies, built Cities, *&c*: 'But,' adds Chrysostom, 'that this [Idolatry] 'might not be paid to the Saints, God ſuffered 'them to be perpetually toſſed, to be beaten, to 'fall into Diſeaſes; that their great Weakneſs 'of Body, and Multitude of Temptations, might 'perſuade or convince thoſe Preſent, that they 'were but Men who wrought ſuch Miracles.'

2. Lactantius flouriſh'd about a hundred Years before Chrysostom. In his ſecond Book of the Origin of Error ‡, ſpeaking of Images, he thus expoſtulates: 'What Madneſs is it 'to form or make thoſe Things, which they 'afterwards fear, or to fear thoſe Things which 'they have formed. 'But,' ſay they, 'we "fear not thoſe Things, but the Perſons to "whoſe likeneſs they are formed, and to whoſe "Names they are conſecrated.' You fear them 'then,' replies the Father, 'becauſe you ſup'poſe them to be in Heaven:——Why then do 'you not lift up your Eyes to Heaven?—Why

* Chrysost, Tom. 3. p. 678. Ed. Lat. *Paris* 1615.
† Hom. 1ma. ad Pop. Antiochen.
‡ C. 2.

'do you rather look to the Walls, the Wood and 'the Stones, than to that Place where you believe 'them to be? What mean theſe Temples? 'What theſe Altars?——What theſe Images? 'which are the Monuments of the Dead, or of 'the Abſent:——If of the Dead, why ſo fool-'iſh as to worſhip them?——If of the Abſent, 'they are not to be worſhiped, if they neither 'ſee what we do, neither hear what we ſay.' He makes it a clear Point, and lays it down for a Truth indiſputable, *that there can be no Religion where there is an Image* *. I would deſire you to read the Remainder of the ſecond Chapter with the fourth of this ſame Book; as they ſhew, not only the No-Antiquity, but the great Folly and Impiety of Image-Worſhip: You would learn too (as you may indeed from what is here quoted) that the Refinement of ſome of your Doctors, who affect to ſay, that they reſt not upon the Type, but by That aſcend to the Prototype, would not at all palliate your Practice in the Opinion of LACTANTIUS.

3. ORIGEN, I think, died in the Year 256; and begun to make a Figure in the Church very early in this Century. In his ſixth Book againſt CELSUS, we find that the Infidel had called the Chriſtians the moſt ignorant, untutor'd, ſlaviſh Wretches: 'But we,' ſays this Father, 'call 'thoſe unlearned and uninſtructed, who are not 'aſhamed to addreſs Things inanimate, to invoke

* Non eſt dubium, quin Religio nulla ſit, ubicunque Simulachrum eſt, C. 18. p. 111. Ed. *Cantab.*

'Health

‘ Health of the Infirm, Life of the Dead, and ‘ Help of the Helpleſs : But if any one ſhall ‘ ſay, that ‘ theſe Things are not Gods, but “ only Symbols in Imitation of the true Gods;’ ‘ —Nevertheleſs,’ continues the Father, ‘ they ‘ alſo are uninſtructed, ignorant and ſlaviſh ‘ Wretches, who imagine that the Imitations of ‘ the divine Nature, or of the Divinity, are from ‘ the Hands of Mechanics ; ſo that the Meaneſt ‘ of our People are far removed from this Igno- ‘ rance *.’ And in another Place, in Anſwer to ſome other Calumnies of his Pagan Adverſary, he ſays, ‘ We teach, to thoſe who are firſt in- ‘ troduced among us, or (as others have render’d ‘ the Words) in the firſt Place, and among the ‘ firſt Things, we teach the Candidates of our ‘ Religion, a Contempt of Idols, *and of all Sta- ‘ tues or Images.*’ You’ll obſerve the Expreſſion Sir, as you ſometimes make a Noiſe and raiſe a Duſt about the Word εἴδωλον as applicable only to the Heathan Gods and their Images : But here you ſee that the early Chriſtians were taught a Contempt not only τῶν εἰδώλων but alſo πάντων τῶν ἀγαλμάτων †.

I WOULD farther obſerve to you, that CELSUS objected to the Chriſtians, ‘ that they made no ‘ Images :——And that in this they reſembled ‘ the *Scythians* and other irreligious and lawleſs ‘ Nations, who dedicated no Image to their Gods, ‘ and counted them Fools who did ſo ‡.’

* ORIG. con. CELS. p 283, 4. Ed. *Cantab.*

† P. 120.

‡ Vid. L. 6. p. 289. L. 7. p. 373. L. 8. p. 389, 404.

4. MINUTIUS

4. MINUTIUS FELIX liv'd about the ſame Time with ORIGEN. In his *Octavius* he ſays, 'That the Ancients were ſimple, credulous and 'imprudent about the very Gods they worſhip-'ed; for by paying a profound Veneration to 'their Kings, and wanting to ſee them again 'after Death, *in Effigie*, and very deſirous to de-'tain their Memories in Marble, at length they 'turn'd theſe monumental Comforts into Objects 'of Devotion *.' Is not this, Sir, the true Hiſtory of the Riſe of Popiſh, as well as Pagan, Idolatry, *viz.* a Veneration for dead Men?

IN ſeveral other Paſſages of this Tract, the Father ſatyrically expoſes the Folly of making and worſhiping Wooden Gods, Deities of Braſs, of Gold or Silver. But it would be tedious to collect all that might be found in him upon this Subject. I ſhall content myſelf with one Place more. The Heathens, it ſeems, objected to the Chriſtians the Adoration of Croſſes. What does MINUTIUS reply to this? Does he diſtinguiſh between *Dulia* and *Latria?*——Or, admitting that they worſhipped the Croſs with *Latria*, does he defend himſelf by ſaying, that it was not with *Latria abſolute*, but *Latria relative*? Not one Word of all this: But 'Croſſes we neither wor-'ſhip nor wiſh for †: You certainly,' continues he, 'who worſhip wooden Gods, are the moſt 'likely to adore wooden Croſſes, as being Parts 'of the ſame Subſtance with your Deities ‡.'

* REEVE's Apologies. Vol. 2. p. 109.
† Cruces-nec colimus, nec optamus.
‡ REEVES ib. p. 143.

YOU'LL

You'll here, Sir, obſerve, by the by, that if, according to what you ſay in another Part of your Letter, *Cultus* has, in this Place, a large Signification, and is uſed here, as you ſay it is by the Proteſtant Divines, to comprehend an inferior Honour; then the primitive Chriſtians, it ſeems, did not pay even this inferior Honour to the Croſs itſelf; ſo much unknown in MINUTIUS's Time was your ſolemn *Adoratio Crucis*.

5. TERTULLIAN flouriſh'd in the latter End of the ſecond Century. In his *Apologetic* he ſays, 'As for Images, I ſhall only obſerve, that 'they are material, and often of the ſame Mat-'ter with your common Utenſils; and 'tis ten 'to one but the holy Image has ſome Siſter-Veſ-'ſel about the Houſe.'——And ſoon after, 'If 'we adore not Statues and Images as cold as 'Death, and in this ſo very like the Bodies they 'repreſent, do not we deſerve Panegyric rather 'than Puniſhment, for leaving an acknowledg'd 'Error*?'

CAN you think, Sir, if the Worſhip of Images had been now in Faſhion in the Church, that TERTULLIAN would have thus apologiz'd for the Chriſtians? Or would he have charged the Heathens with Idolatry, for practiſing what was admitted among themſelves? Could the Father with any Decency or Conſiſtency have defended Chriſtianity for renouncing this Error, had it not been renounced? Could he have claim'd

* TERTULL. Op. Tom. 2. p. 618, 620. Ed. *Pariſ.* 1566.

Applauſe

Applauſe for doing himſelf what he thus ſeverely cenſures in others *?

His whole Book of Idolatry is well worth your Peruſal: A few Extracts I ſhall give you from it, which ſeem more directly to condemn your Practice, and to confute the Arguments you have made uſe of in the firſt Part of your Letter. 'Every Form or little Repreſentation 'requires to be term'd an Idol: Hence all At-'tendance and Service about an Idol, is Idolatry. '——God forbids an Idol to be *made* as well as '*worſhiped.*——To root out all Foundation and 'Materials of Idolatry the Divine Law hath 'proclaimed, *Ye ſhall not make an Idol.* It is 'human Error to worſhip any Thing, except 'the Creator of all Things†.' He afterwards proceeds at large to anſwer the Arguments made uſe of by the Artiſts or Statuaries in defence of their Practice. One of theſe is what you have alledg'd, *viz.* Moses's making the brazen Serpent. To which, among other Things he replies, 'If we interpret theſe Things as Enemies of the 'Law, do not we, as the *Marcionites*, aſcribe 'inconſtancy to the Almighty; whom they thus 'deſtroy as a changeable Being, while he forbids 'in one Place, what he commands in another ‡?

* Vid. Lib. de Idol. P. 448, 453.

† Omnis Forma, vel Formula Idolum ſe dici expoſit. Inde Idololatria, omnis circa omne Idolum Famulatus et Servitus: Idolum tam *fieri* quam *coli* Deus prohibet: ——ad eradicandam ſcilicet Materiam Idololatriæ Lex divina proclamavit, Ne feceritis Idolum; Omnia igitur colit humanus Error præter ipſum Omnium Conditorem. P. 446, 448.

‡ Si hæc ut Adverſarij Legis interpretemur, nunquid & nos quod & Marcionitæ inconſtantiam aſcribimus Omnipotenti, quem illi hoc Modo deſtruunt ut mutabilem; dum alibi vetat, alibi mandat. p. 447.

'And

And afterwards he ſays, 'If there is Honour gi-'ven to an Idol, without doubt that Honour is 'Idolatry *.' You'll conſider then, Sir, how far your Sentiments of *Honour* and *Reſpect* to Images (did you go no further, as you manifeſtly do) would have been approved of by this Father.

6. ST. CLEMENT of *Alexandria* was very little before TERTULLIAN, if not Cotempory with him. If you had alledged to this Father the Cherubims as Proofs of ſacred Images being lawful, and Objects of Religious Worſhip, he would have told you the Inconſiſtency of ſuch a Suppoſition or Argument, with other Parts of MOSES's Conduct: 'For never,' ſays CLEMENT, 'would 'he who perſuaded not (*i. e.* who forbad) a gra-'ven Image, have himſelf framed an Image of 'holy Things †.'

IN his *Advice to the* Greeks, you have ſeveral Pages to ſhew the Folly and great Impiety of Image-Worſhip. A Sentence or two may content you. 'In Truth, an Image is dead Matter, 'framed by the Hand of the Artiſt. But we 'have no ſenſible (or material) Image:——But 'an Image to be apprehended by the Mind, not by 'Senſe, is GOD, the only truly GOD ‡.' Before he had ſaid, 'That the meaneſt Creatures are 'better than Statues or Images; for thoſe have 'Senſe, but theſe have none, being altogether 'idle, unactive and inſenſible.' He afterwards

* SI Idoli Honor eſt, ſine dubio Idoli honor Idololatria eſt. p. 457.

† CLEMENT. Oper. P. 241. Ed. Commelin. 1592.

‡ Adhort. ad Gent. p. 15.

asks, ‘ Why do you give the Honour of God ‘ to thoſe that are not Gods? Why, leaving ‘ Heaven, have ye *honoured* the Earth? for what ‘ elſe is Gold, or Silver, or Adamant, or Iron, ‘ or Braſs, or Ivory, or precious Stones? Are ‘ not all theſe Things the Offspring of one Mo- ‘ ther, the Earth?—But why have you, vain and ‘ ſhallow Men, reproaching the ſuper-celeſtial ‘ Region, drawn your Devotion to the Ground, ‘ making to yourſelves earthen Gods?

You'll pleaſe, Sir, once more to obſerve, that in the Beginning of this laſt Quotation, he makes uſe of the Word τετιμήκατε from whence I collect that the Diſtinction you have invented between *Honour* and *Worſhip*, while you affect to deny This, but to pay That to your ſacred Images, was quite unknown in Clement's Days.

I will but trouble you with one Obſervation more from this Book of Clement's. It is where, ſpeaking of the divine Honours paid to the Images of the Heathens, he mentions the Incenſe and Victims offer'd them, and the Smoke with which they are honoured and fumigated and *grown black*: This, Sir, naturally reminds one of the holy Image at *Loretto*, whoſe Face, we are told by Travellers, is as black as a Negroe's; and this owing to the ſame Honours of Lamps and Incenſe, which were given to the Pagan Idols

7. Justin Martyr flouriſh'd about the Year 160. In his Apology he ſays, ‘ We can- ‘ not vouchſafe to worſhip with numerous Victims ‘ and

'and Garlands of Flowers the Work of Men's 'Hands; what you must help into the Temple, 'and being so placed, think fit to dub them 'Gods ‖.'

UPON this Passage the worthy Translator, Mr. REEVES, observes, 'that the primitive Christians 'started at every Thing that had but the least 'Symbolizing with the Heathen Idolatry: They 'look'd upon the very *Making* of Idols, without 'any Design to worship them, as an unlawful 'Trade, and inconsistent with Christianity.'

BUT to return to JUSTIN; 'What need I 'mention,' says he, 'how the Artists manage 'the subject Matter of their Gods; how they 'hack it and hew it, and cast it and hammer it, and 'not seldom from Vessels of Dishonour, by chang-'ing their Figure only, and giving them ano-'ther Turn by the Help of Art, out comes a 'worshipful Set of Things you call GODS. This 'we look upon, not only as the highest Flight 'of humane Folly, but the most injurious Af-'front to the true GOD §.'

I HAVE nothing more of JUSTIN's Works by me but the Apology here quoted, nor any other of the Fathers but those here referred to; from whence I learn to draw a few Observations.

1. THAT many of those Things which they charge upon the Pagans as Idolatrous, have been and still are practised by the Papists. 2. That these Fathers blame not Idols only as Represen-

‖ Ch. 9.

§ REEVES's Apolog. Vol. 1. P. 26, 27.

tations of Demons, or devoted to falſe Gods; but as in themſelves improper Objects of Worſhip, as being framed of corruptible and ſenſeleſs Matter,——without Life and Motion,——the Work of Men's Hands,——detracting from God's Honour, contradicting his expreſs Command, and deſtructive of his true and ſpiritual Worſhip. 3. There is not, I think, one Truth more clearly deducible from the Writings of the Fathers of the ſecond and third Century, than the Prohibition of Image-Worſhip; and you might as well appeal to primitive Antiquity to prove and juſtify the Worſhip of the Devil as the Worſhip of Idols.

To confirm my own Sentiments, I muſt here give you the Remark of a very ſenſible Writer, and who ſpeaks like one familiar with his Subject. 'The Fathers,' ſays he, 'inſiſted on it to the 'laſt, that all ſuch Images as were made the 'Objects of worſhip were Idols; ſo that if in 'any one Thing we have a very full Account 'of the Senſe of the whole Church for the firſt 'four Centuries, it is in this Matter. They do 'not ſpeak of it now and then only by the Way, 'as in a Digreſſion, in which the Heat of Ar-'gument, or of Rhetoric may be apt to carry 'Men too far; they ſet themſelves to treat of 'of this Argument very nicely; and they were 'engaged in it with Philoſophers, who were as 'good at Subtilties and Diſtinctions as other 'Men: This was one of the main Parts of the 'Controverſy; ſo if on any Head whatſo-

'ever

'ever they writ exactly, it is upon thoſe Sub-'jects.

But I need not urge you with the Authority of our Proteſtant Writers; your own Dupin confeſſes, 'That in the three firſt Centuries, and 'in the Beginning of the fourth, they [Images] '*were very ſcarce* among Chriſtians.' He ſhould have ſpoke out plainly, and told his Reader, that they *were utterly unknown*; for he afterwards adds, 'Towards the End of the fourth 'Century *they began*, eſpecially in the Eaſt, *to* '*make* Pictures and Images, and they grew very 'common in the Fifth *.'

Many other learned Perſons of your Church have fairly acknowledg'd the ſame; and it is really amazing to ſee, the whole Current of Primitive Chriſtianity being againſt you, what pitiful Excuſes and Apologies have been made for this Practice. The Fathers of the *Nicene* Council, in the Arguments they produce for it from Antiquity, go upon meer legendary Fables, and the Dreams of ſuperſtitious Monks, rather than any clear Teſtimony or Authority from the genuine Fathers.

It pities one ſtill more to ſee ſo learned and ingenuous a Perſon as Dupin forced, in ſupport of a Syſtem, to uſe ſuch wretched Sophiſtry, as he does upon this Occaſion. 'There is no doubt,' ſays he, 'but when Paganiſm was the prevailing 'Religion, it would have been dangerous for 'Chriſtians to have Images or Statues, becauſe

* Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. 8th Cent. P. 146.

'they

'they might give Occaſion of Idolatry to them, 'who were newly recovered from it; and they 'might have given Pagans reaſon to object to 'Chriſtians, that they had and worſhiped Idols 'as they did: Therefore it was fitting there 'ſhould be no Images in thoſe firſt Ages, eſpe-'cially in Churches, and that there ſhould be 'no worſhip paid them. Afterwards, People 'being better taught, more learned and farther 'off from Idolatry, there was not ſo much 'danger to propoſe them to them; and the 'Church being more ſplendid in her Ceremonies, 'they ſerved as Ornaments to Temples, *&c.* 'Therefore, there being no more danger of Ido-'latry, why ſhould not Chriſtians have Idols †?'

In Anſwer to this, it muſt be acknowledg'd, that CHRIST *was manifeſted in the Fleſh to deſtroy* 'the *Works of the Devil*; one of whoſe greateſt Works was the Support of Idolatry:——That it was the great Reproach of the Gentiles, before their Converſion to CHRIST, *that they were carried away to dumb Idols*:——That while PAUL preached at *Athens*, *his Spirit was ſtirred*, or rather exaſperated, *in him*, *when he ſaw the City full of Idols*:——That he and BARNABAS preached to the Men of *Lyſtra*, *that they ſhould turn from theſe Vanities to the living* GOD, *who made Heaven and Earth*, *and the Sea*, *and all Things that are therein*. *What Agreement*, ſays the Apoſtle, *hath the Temple of* GOD *with Idols?*——And, again to the *Corinthians* he ſays, *Flee from Idolatry*: And

† Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. 8th Cent. P. 147.

to

to the ſame Purpoſe St. JOHN, *Keep yourſelves from Idols.* It muſt be further Acknowledged, that the ſucceeding Apologiſts for Chriſtianity for three hundred Years after CHRIST, during a great Part of which Time the miraculous Spirit of GOD reſided in the Church, were equally vehement againſt all uſe of Images in the divine Service.

Now what ſays our learned Sorboniſt to all this? Why, truly, that the Chriſtians of the fifth, ſixth, ſeventh and eighth Centuries, after the miraculous Spirit of GOD had departed from the Church, *were better taught, and more learned: i. e.* Than they had been by CHRIST and his Apoſtles, and their immediate Succeſſors. The Founder of our holy Religion had enjoined the Worſhip of GOD *in Spirit and in Truth*; but now Ceremony and Splendor were become more faſhionable:——And Idolatry being aboliſhed by CHRIST, why might not Chriſtians have Idols?

THE learned Writer ſeems, all this while to be labouring againſt the Truth, and conſcious that he had got a bad Cauſe to maintain; for obſerve how candid and ingenuous after all is his Confeſſion: 'It [the Worſhip of Images] can-'not be ſaid to be abſolutely neceſſary; and thoſe, 'who for ſome private Reaſon, do not think 'themſelves bound, for inſtance, to proſtrate 'themſelves before Images, to bow to them, to 'kiſs them, to embrace them, to expreſs their 'Reverence for that they repreſent;——thoſe, I 'ſay, are not to be condemned as Heretics, who 'will not do ſo for ſome particular Reaſons, either

'becauſe

'becauſe the Practice of their Church,' (he ſhould have ſaid, becauſe the Practice of the univerſal Church for at leaſt three hundred Years after CHRIST) 'is otherwiſe, or becauſe they 'fear thoſe outward Duties ſhould be miſta-'ken for Adorations; or, laſtly, becauſe they 'do not believe the Worſhip of Images to be 'ſufficiently warranted; ſeeing to prove it, they '(*i. e.* the *Nicene* Fathers) have alledged *a great 'Number of falſe Pieces, or of impertinent Paſſages 'that prove nothing* *.'

I WOULD but obſerve to you further upon this Head of Antiquity, that the primitive Chriſtians would ſooner die a thouſand Deaths, than worſhip or burn Incenſe to an Image or Idol; and that the vileſt Heretics, the *Gnoſticks* and *Carpocratians*, were peculiarly noted for doing both. Now is it not ſomething ſtrange, that Proteſtants ſhould be term'd Heretics, for doing that which ennobled Martyrs; and that the Catholic Chriſtian ſhould be He, who practiſes that which diſtinguiſh'd Heretics?

XIII.

So much for your boaſted Antiquity of Image-Worſhip; or, as you call it, *The Uſe of Images*; 'Which ſubſiſted,' ſay you, 'ſo many hundred 'Years before the Reformation, and conſequent-'ly before our Church had any viſible exiſtence 'in the Univerſe.'

* Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. 8th Cent. P. 147.

1. So,

1. So, my Friend, did Pagan Idolatry before the Chriſtian Church had any viſible exiſtence in the Univerſe; ſo did *Egyptian* Superſtition before the *Jewiſh* Church had any ſuch viſible exiſtence. The meer Antiquity of any Practice, as I told you before, does not prove it's Reaſonableneſs and Truth: Or, ſay it did, let me ask you, Where was your viſible Church, as diſtinguiſh'd from ours, and enjoining the Belief of Tranſubſtantiation, of the Pope's Supremacy and Infallibility, with the Practice of Image-Worſhip, of Prayers in an unknown Tongue, the Invocation of Saints and Angels, and Communion in one Kind:——Where was this viſible Church of yours for ſome hundred Years after CHRIST?

2. RELIGION came clear from the Fountain,——was by degrees in Part corrupted, and we, as well as you, drank for ſome time of the tainted Stream. A Courſe of Years has, by GOD's Bleſſing, purify'd the groſs and troubled Maſs, which, as it run, refined: We are again greatly *enriched with the River of* GOD; and though we ſtand lower down in the Stream, yet we envy not your Mud and Mire, while we enjoy *the Upper Springs and the nether Springs.*

'TIS idle and impertinent to object Novelty to our Religion, till you can prove that the moral Law and the Goſpel, Prophets and Apoſtles and the primitive Creeds, which the Church of *England* profeſſes as the Rule of her Faith and Practice, are new Things.

3. CHRIST gave to his Diſciples a *new* Commandment; will you therefore reject it? He calls

the Cup in the Sacrament the *new* Teſtament in his Blood; Do you *therefore* deny it to the Laity? The *Athenians* called PAUL a *Setter forth of ſtrange Gods*: *i. e.* A Preacher of a new Religion: And both CELSUS of old, and TINDAL very lately, deny the Truth and Divinity of Chriſtianity, becauſe of its *Novelty*. You had beſt, Sir, therefore not urge this Argument any more, leſt you ſtrengthen the Hands of Infidelity, and weaken the Authority of the Common Faith, while you would only deſtroy the Proteſtant Reformation.

XIV.

I PROCEED to the other Parts of your Letter. 'Pictures,' you ſay, or the Council of *Nice* ſays, 'teach and repreſent the ſame Things in 'Colours, which the Goſpel Books teach and 'repreſent by Letters.'

1. SIR, the Subject we are upon is not *Pictures* and their Hiſtorical Uſe which we allow, but *Images* and their ſolemn Adoration, which we utterly deny and reject. But ſuch have been your Arts of old: When preſs'd with Image-Worſhip, which you are ſworn to maintain, you fly off, and acquaint us with the Advantage of Hiſtory Painting. Thus good Mr. HARDING, long ago, knowing that the Prophets and Apoſtles were againſt him, quotes the Authority of VIRGIL, and his pious Heroe ÆNEAS contemplating a Picture at *Carthage*, in the Palace of good Queen DIDO. I am ſtill more ſorry for DUPIN, when I ſee *Him* forced to take Refuge in the ſame Arti-

'fice:

'fice: Wholly,' says he, 'to condemn Painters 'and the Art of Painting, as the Bishops of the 'Council of *Constantinople* have done, is a Piece 'of intolerable Imprudence and Folly *:'—— When both you and Mr. DUPIN knew very well that the Church of *England* and its Members do not condemn either Painters or the Art of Painting.

2. NEITHER the Council of *Nice*, nor any Council upon Earth can set aside the Authority of GOD. Sir, both you and they have forgot or overlook your Bible, 'And the Lord spake 'unto you out of the Midst of the Fire; ye 'heard the Voice of the Words, but saw no 'Similitude, only ye heard a Voice.——Take 'therefore good Heed unto yourselves (for ye 'saw no Manner of Similitude, ὁμοίωμα, on the 'Day that the Lord spake unto you in *Horeb*, 'out of the midst of Fire) lest ye corrupt 'yourselves and make you a graven Image †.' But, in open Defiance of GOD Almighty descending upon the Mount in Fire, in open Contradiction to the Voice of Heaven, says this Council, τὰς σεπτὰς εἰκόνας σέβομαι καὶ προσκυνῶ.

3. HAD you, Sir, or they, been defending the Cause of Pagan Idolatry, you might have talk'd at the Rate you do; and with more Truth have affirmed, that APELLES did but represent the same Things in Colours, *viz.* the Generation and Intrigues of the Gods, as HESIOD and OVID did

* Ecclesiast. Hist. 8th Cent. P. 147.
† Deutron. 4. v. 12——15, 16.

by Letters; and we could not, allowing the Orthodoxy of the Poets, have blamed the Pious Ingenuity of the Painter: But tell me, Sir, what Art can Paint, what Hand of the Sculptor engrave, the GOD of Glory;——the *Form ineffable*, as JUSTIN MARTYR calls him ‡? What mechanical Ingenuity of MAN can deſcribe the ſpiritual Truths of GOD? What Colours will you employ to expreſs the ever-bleſſed Trinity: ——To repreſent a Spirit, endleſs in his Duration, and infinite in his Nature? The Attempt would be Sacrilegious as the Execution impoſſible; and yet Monuments of this impious Preſumption have been, and, I believe, yet are publicly allowed in your Churches; and your own Writers ſpeak of them without Reprehenſion, nay with Applauſe ‖.

WHEN urg'd by this Objection, your Reply has been, that the Images of CHRIST may be made, 'for that he took upon him Fleſh and be-'came Man.' But by this Excuſe you but involve yourſelves in new Guilt, and run from one Error into another: In adoring this Image of CHRIST, you adore his humane Nature, which is all, as you acknowledge, that can be repreſented by an Image.

4. I EITHER know nothing of Religion,—— of the Religion of CHRIST, or this warm Con-

‡ REEVE's Apologies. Vol. 1. p. 27.

‖ ALL about the Cathedral of *Florence* there are excellent Statues, but the beſt are an ADAM and EVE, one of our Saviour and of GOD the Father; the Work of BACCIO BANDINELLI, a *Florentine*, placed in the Choir, and on the High Altar. CHURCHIL's Voyages. Vol. 4. p. 563.

tention

tention of your's for ſenſible material Images of him, has not the leaſt Relation to his Service. *The Righteouſneſs of* GOD, *which is by Faith in* JESUS CHRIST, *is no bodily Service.* CHRIST, *is to be formed* (not *without* but) *within us**. Hence CLEMENT calls the Soul of a juſt Man, in whom is the eternal Word, *an Image moſt divine, and like to* GOD †. *We are to be renewed in the Spirit of our Minds;——and to put on the new Man, which after* [the Image of] GOD *is created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs* ‡.——*What profiteth the graven Image, that the Maker thereof hath graven it?* ſays the Prophet ||, under the legal Diſpenſation: And ſhall we Chriſtians, *who are built up a ſpiritual Houſe, an holy Prieſthood to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices acceptable to* GOD *by* JESUS CHRIST——Shall we go back *to*, nay *beyond* and *againſt* the Elements of the Law, and ſay, that *a graven Image profiteth?*

XV.

'BUT we Proteſtants bow at the Name of 'JESUS:' And you ſay, 'that the Name JESUS 'is not only a Creature, but alſo a Sign or Image 'of Him, to the Ear, as a Crucifix is to the 'Eye.'

1. WE acknowledge, that we do bow at the Name of JESUS; 'teſtifying' (as the Canon,

* *Gal.* 4. 19.
† CLEMENT. Oper. p. 300.
‡ *Epheſ.* 3, 23, 24.
|| *Habak.* 2. 18.

which

which enjoins this Obeiſance, expreſſes it) ‘ by ‘ theſe outward Ceremonies and Geſtures, our ‘ inward Humility, Chriſtian Reſolution, and ‘ due Acknowledgment, that the Lord JESUS ‘ CHRIST, the true, eternal Son of GOD, is the ‘ only Saviour of the World; in whom alone all ‘ the Mercies, Graces and Promiſes of GOD to ‘ Mankind, for this Life, and the Life to come, ‘ are fully and wholly compriz'd *.' Pray, Sir, is this outward Reverence, expreſſive of our inward Piety and due Acknowledgment of the Mercies of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, *the eternal Son of* GOD, *and only Saviour of the World*, Creature Worſhip?

2. YES, ſay you: The *Name* of CHRIST is a Creature and the *Image* is but a Creature: The *Name* of CHRIST is a Sign, and the *Image* is but a Sign: *i.e.* the *Name* and *Image* of CHRIST are the ſame Thing: By which Aſſertions beware, dear Sir, that you do not blunder and blaſpheme; for according to this Kind of Sophiſtry, you will confound all Rules of Grammar and Logic, as well as Common Senſe; burleſque the Scriptures, and ſet GOD at Variance with himſelf.

I WILL not tire your Patience, by turning you back into your *Elements*: I addreſs you as a Divine, and only deſire you'll view your Reaſoning in it's *Conſequences*. According to what you have advanc'd, this muſt follow: The *Name* is a *Sign* of GOD, and an *Image* is the *Sign* of

* Can. 28.

GOD:

GOD: Therefore, the Name and Image of GOD are the ſame Thing. Thus, according to you, when CHRIST commands us to pray to his and our eternal Father which is in Heaven, 'Hallowed be thy *Name*;' it is the ſame Thing as if he had ſaid, 'Hallowed be thy Image. When GOD commanded, 'Thou ſhalt not take my '*Name* in vain.' he meant neither more nor leſs than if he had ſaid, 'Thou ſhalt not profane my '*Image*.' And in ſeveral Parts of the Pſalms, where the holy Penman exhorts, *to exalt* GOD's *Name*,——*to call upon his Name*,——*to ſing forth the Honour of his Name*:——and declares, *that his Name is great in* Iſrael, and that *bleſſed ſhall be his glorious Name for ever and ever*: All this means the ſame Thing, as if the Pſalmiſt had exhorted and been ſpeaking of GOD's material Image to be called upon, to be celebrated with Songs, to be exalted, and to be bleſſed for ever and ever.— But I forbear: To repeat your Arguments, is to expoſe them: I would only adviſe you, when you have Occaſion at any Time hereafter for this Argument, that you would back it with the Authority of THEODOSIUS; who in the *Nicene* Council proves, that Chriſtians muſt have holy and venerable Images from *Rom.* 15. *v.* 4. *Whatſoever Things were written* (προεγεγράφη) *aforetime, were written for our Learning.* 'Wherefore, in-'fers this ſagacious Father, the venerable Images 'being written upon Wood and Stone and Metal, 'muſt be for our Inſtruction †.' Who can withſtand the Force of ſuch Logic and ſuch Divinity?

† Act. 4. p. 213.

XVI.

XVI.

'BUT we Proteſtants kiſs the Goſpel, with-'out giving ſupream Honour to the ſame.'

1. IN an Oath, GOD alone (and not Saint or Angel, the Prototypes of ſome of your Images) is immediately invoked, as a Witneſs of the Truth, and an Avenger of Falſhood, and not the Book, the Paper and the Leather, but the *Contents* of that Book are appealed to, which was revealed from Heaven. But you, Sir, cannot deny that you directly addreſs and adore the material Croſs: Nor will you ſay with the *Epheſians*, that your Images, like theirs of the great Goddeſs DIANA, came down from Heaven.

2. HAVE you ever heard, Sir, that the Proteſtants pray to the Bible, or addreſs it with bended Knees and low Proſtrations? This you do to your Images: You adore the Croſs with *Latria*, (and are commanded ſo to do) which is Worſhip properly Divine; as you muſt know, if you know any Thing of your own Writers. Now *Latria* being the ſupream, the higheſt Worſhip, I pray you, Sir, what Room is there for St. THOMAS's Diſtinction, which you mention of *Latria* relative, and *Latria* abſolute: ——that is, of a higher and lower ſupreme and higheſt Worſhip?

3. KISSING the Goſpel is no proper Part, nor indeed any Part at all of the Public Service of the Church of *England*: It is meerly a *civil Ceremony*, and owes its validity to humane Inſtitution. Of the ſame Import, Arch-Biſhop TILLOTSON

LOTSON reckons *the liſting up the Hand to Heaven; the putting the Hand under the Thigh*, &c. which were Forms of Swearing uſed in ancient Times, without any Hint of divine Inſtitution; but voluntarily taken up and inſtituted by Men. And thus (ſays that moſt reverend Author) amongſt us the Ceremony of Swearing is, *by laying the Hand upon and kiſſing the Book*; which is both very ſolemn and ſignificant *. Biſhop SANDERSON alſo mentions this Ceremony, as being *a priſco ſeculo ad nos uſque derivata* †. And I make no doubt, this was a civil Uſage and Inſtitution long before the Reformation, under HENRY VIII; and conſequently OUR ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTION has nothing to do with it. It is no more than a Sign or Seal of an Oath——an Act, which our Church in her Articles doth no more than allow, as *That which the Chriſtian Religion doth not prohibit*; and it is only ſuppoſed to be taken occaſionally, when the civil Power, or *Magiſtrate requireth it*. In Truth, it is no more than a ſhort and expreſſive Declaration, by the Party who ſwears, that as he is a Chriſtian, and a Believer of the Truths deliver'd in that Book, what he aſſerts is true But the Worſhip of Images is a ſolemn Part of your eſtabliſhed Service——ſtrictly enjoin'd and univerſally practiſed.

XVII.

YOU next alledge, 'our Idolatry in *receiving* 'the Communion kneeling.'

* 1 Vol. Fol. p. 246.
† Prælect. 5. de Juram. oblig. ch. 11.

1. You had never objected this, had you but taken the Pains to peruse the Declaration affix'd to our Communion Office; where it is said, 'That 'this Order of Kneeling is well meant, for the 'Signification of our humble and grateful Acknowledgement of the Benefits of CHRIST, 'therein given to all worthy Receivers, and for 'the Avoiding of such Profanation and Disorder 'in the holy Communion as might otherwise ensue——*and that thereby no Adoration is intended, 'or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental 'Bread and Wine there bodily received, or unto any 'corporal Presence of* CHRIST's *natural Flesh and 'Blood.*'——

2. You might as well have call'd us Idolaters, for praying or giving of Thanks *kneeling* in the Body of the Church, as at the Communion Table; there being no more corporal Presence, or material Image of GOD or CHRIST, in the one Place than in the other.

3. You are here guilty of a small Mistake in saying, 'that, according to our Principles, 'CHRIST is not *really* present in the Sacramental Bread and Wine.' It is the *corporal*, not the *real* Presence, we deny in the Sacrament: And may we not safely and truly admit the one, while we reject the other? Or will you say, that where GOD or CHRIST is not *corporally* present, he is not *really* present?

XVIII.

You say, 'You could never be Dunce enough 'to think a Child guilty of Idolatry, for kneel-

'ing

'ing down to crave his Father's Bleſſing; or a 'Subject, for bowing to his King, the Chair of 'State, his Friend, or the like; and yet this muſt 'be my Opinion of theſe exterior Actions.' Far from it indeed, good Sir.

1. THE Honour given to a Prince is *civil*, not *religious*, and only expreſſive of our Loyalty, and of that Subjection, which the Apoſtle tells us, is due *for Conſcience ſake*. But does Conſcience, or any Apoſtolical Precept require, that we ſhould bow down to Images? Or does not the Commandment of GOD expreſly ſay, 'Thou ſhalt '*not bow down to them*?' The primitive Chriſtians, you know, would ſooner die than offer Incenſe, which they looked on as divine Honour, to the Image of their Prince; yet they refuſed no Inſtance or Expreſſion of civil Obedience to his Perſon. DANIEL choſe rather to be caſt into the Den of Lions, than intermit his Devotions to Heaven, and direct or confine his religious Addreſſes to an earthly Monarch. Yet DANIEL, I am perſuaded, would not be wanting in any *civil* Modes of Addreſs or Reverence, practiſed in the *Perſian* Court, to the Perſon of his Prince*.

2. IF you would ſay any thing to the Purpoſe, on this Head, you muſt ſhew, that a Subject or a Child may worſhip the Image of their Parent or

* Igitur quod attineat ad Honores Regum vel Imperatorum, ſatis præceptum habemus, in omni Obſequio eſſe nos oportere, ſecundum Apoſtoli præceptum, ſubditos Magiſtratibus & Principibus & Poteſtatibus; ſed intra limites Diſciplinæ, quouſque ab Idololatria ſeperamur.

TERTULL. Vol. 2. p. 458.

Prince,

Prince, contrary to their expreſs Prohibition, and without any Breach of their Allegience or Violation of Duty.

XIX.

'You confeſs, that your People do ſometimes 'kneel, bow, creep, burn Incenſe before your 'Images; but you deny my Conſequence, that 'they therefore pay divine Worſhip to the Ima'ges. The *Thurifer*, you ſay, will frequently 'incenſe the Quire, *&c.*'

Sir, I mentioned to you, from the *Pontif. Roman* † the Prieſt's incenſing not the Quire, but the Image of the Virgin Mary‡. Your Reply is therefore nothing to the Purpoſe. You cannot deny either the Authority or the Fact: Indeed you do not; but only attempt to evade what you are aſhamed to confeſs; apprehending, perhaps, that it might bring you under the Character of thoſe ancient Idolaters, who *burnt Incenſe to the Queen of Heaven* §: As your Style is, in ſome of your Addreſſes to the bleſſed Virgin.

Your mentioning the *Thurifer* puts me in mind of the *Thurarius* among the Gentiles; an Office or Profeſſion not ſo immediately and nearly concern'd, as your *Thurifer* is, in burning Incenſe to the Images: And yet he was highly cenſured by Tertullian: His Words are worth your Notice; 'There 'is no Art, no Profeſſion, which adminiſters to

† Part 2. p. 165.

‡ Pontifex Imaginem Mariæ thurificat.

§ Jerem. c. 44. 19.

'the

'the Furniſhing or Forming of Idols, which can 'want or be clear from the Imputation of Ido-'latry‖.'

I MUST further obſerve to you, that this Rite, and many others which you practice towards your Images, are the very ſame that were practiſed by the Heathens to their Idols, and for which they were look'd upon by the primitive Fathers, as guilty of Idolatry: So that you muſt either clear the Pagans, or condemn yourſelves:—— accuſe the Fathers as incompetent, or diſhoneſt Judges of what was Idolatry, or you can never blame us for affixing the ſame Name to the ſame Acts.

XX.

BUT after all, 'the whole Juggle, it ſeems, 'depends on the Words, *Worſhip*, *Adoration*, *&c.* 'as made by us neceſſarily to imply divine Honour, 'in the ſtricteſt Manner; and you wonder that I 'ſhould be ignorant, or ſeem to be ignorant, 'that the *Latin* and *Greek* Words *Adoratio* and 'προσκύνησις are apply'd in Scripture ſometimes 'to Creatures, and conſequently ſignify bowing, 'or Reſpect in a more general Senſe.'

I SUPPOSE, by *general* Senſe, you here mean ſuch a large Signification as may imply or allow a more limited and lower Degree of Worſhip. And if this is your meaning, as it muſt be if it

‖ Nulla igitur Ars, nulla Profeſſio, nulla Negociatio, quæ quid aut inſtruendis aut formandis Idolis adminiſtrat, carere poterit titulo Idololatriæ. Tom. 2. p. 454.

has

has any thing to do with the Argument, you had much more Reaſon to admire my Ignorance, did I not know, that your Criticiſm and Logic are here both alike, *i. e.* ſtark naught.

1. SUPPOSE the Word προσκυνῶ, the Word made uſe of by the *Nicene* Fathers, is *ſometimes* apply'd in Scriptures to the Creatures; this does by no means conclude, that therefore thoſe Fathers would have it *ſo* apply'd. It muſt be ſuppoſed, if you will allow them to be Men of either Senſe or Honeſty, that they make uſe of the Word as it is *generally*, not *ſometimes only*, underſtood. Law-makers, whether in Church or State, ſhould be as clear and explicit as poſſible in their Expreſſions, and make uſe of Words in their common and ordinary Senſe and Signification; otherwiſe they would betray Men into Tranſgreſſion, rather than direct them in their Duty.

2. BUT the Word προσκυνῶ does *generally* imply divine Honour, in Scripture:——Is the Word moſt conſtantly apply'd to GOD and his Worſhip. The Pſalms alone will give you numerous Proofs of this Application and Uſe of the Word; and the Authority of our Lord ſhould be of no little Weight; *Thou ſhalt worſhip* (προσκυνήσεις) *the Lord thy* GOD. MAT. 4. 10. It would be almoſt endleſs to give you all the Paſſages in the New Teſtament, where this Word is found in the ſame Senſe. I would but remind you of that of the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*; *When he bringeth in the Firſt-begotten into the World, he ſaith*; *And let all the Angels of* GOD *Worſhip him*: προσκυνησάτωσαν

προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ. *Heb.* 1. *v.* 6. *Adore him,* ſaith your *Rhemiſh* Tranſlation and the Vulgate. Now if you maintain, that this Word does properly imply a leſſer Degree of Reſpect, you are detracting both from the Honour of GOD and the Lord JESUS:——If in this laſt quoted Paſſage you ſay, that it means, or may mean, a leſſer Degree of Adoration, you make the Apoſtle deny the Divinity of CHRIST: For, if CHRIST is God, then ſupreme divine Honour muſt be due to Him.

3. BUT further, when this Word is joined to Idols and falſe Gods, it has generally the ſame Meaning, and does not imply any leſſer Degree of Reſpect: So in the ſecond Commandment, 'Thou ſhalt not worſhip them [Idols]' the Vulgate hath it *non adorabis ea neque coles*; for which the Septuagint *Greek* is οὐ προσκυνήσεις αὐτοῖς οὐδὲ μὴ λατρεύσεις, where λατρεύω and προσκυνῶ are uſed in one and the ſame Meaning; and hence ariſes the Guilt of Idolatry; *viz.* The giving to the Creature, what is only due to the Creator. To omit numerous Proofs of this in the Prophets, obſerve the following: In the third Chapter of DANIEL, *v.* 12, 14, 17, 18, 28, you will find the Words λατρεύω and προσκυνῶ uſed indifferently, to ſignify the ſame Thing, as noted above. And do you think, that SHADRACK, MESHACK and ABEDNEGO refuſed any leſſer Degree of civil Reſpect to NEBUCHADNEZZAR's Image, as if no more had been required of them, than to bow to the Chair of State, to kiſs the King's Hand, *&c.* TERTULLIAN tells us, upon this Occaſion,

'That

'That the three Brethren, in other Reſpects o-'bedient to the King, moſt conſtantly refuſed to 'give Honour to his Image; *proving that to be 'Idolatry, whatſoever exceeded the Meaſure of hu-'man Honour, and approach'd the Likeneſs of di-'vine Adoration**.'

4. THE Worſhip you pay to the Virgin MARY, to the Saints, to the Croſs, and other Images, is of the religious Kind; and all your Diſtinctions of a higher and lower Degree of Religious Worſhip are idle, impious, and unſcriptural. There is, properly and truly, but one religious Worſhip, and That of the higheſt Kind, due to GOD alone, as the one ſupreme Being, who is infinitely exalted above all; and the Prohibitions given to Man, not to fall down before the Angels themſelves, is a ſufficient Warrant and Authority (had we not far greater, the Authority of GOD himſelf, ſpeaking from the Mount) not to fall down to the Image of Saint or Angel, nor addreſs them in Prayers and Praiſes, due only to GOD, who is bleſſed for ever.

5. YOUR Argument in this Place, if it is good for any Thing, proves a great Deal too much, and fixes the Charge of Idolatry upon you, rather than removes it; for thus it is convertible to the Proteſtant Cauſe.

THE Word *Dulia* is apply'd *ſometimes* in Scripture to the Creator, and conſequently ſignifies

* ——Et illud Exemplum trium Fratrum præcurrit, qui alias obſequeates erga Regem NEBUCHODONOZOR, honorem Imaginis conſtantiſſime reſpuerint; *probantes Idol latriam quicquid ultra humani Honoris modum ad inſtar divinæ Sublimitatis extollitur.* Tom. 2. p. 458.

Adoration

Adoration in the higheſt Senſe; as in 1. SAM. 7. 3,—12, 14, 20. MATT. 6. 24. *Rom.* 10. 11. So that when you worſhip the Saints and their Images with *Dulia* (as you will not deny you do) you worſhip them with Adoration properly divine and ſupreme.

How then, Sir, can you ſay that we calumniate, when we thus infer from your own Premiſes, and only build on your own Method of Argumentation? May you hence learn, that Error is endleſs; and that to maintain *one* Falſhood, does but draw you into more.

XXI.

You ask, 'Do not you worſhip the Communion Table, when you bow to it?'

1. SIR, I might here acquaint you, from ſome of our approved and eminent Writers, that the Table is not the direct and primary Object of the Reverence we expreſs by bowing——That it is only a ſignificant Action, whereby we teſtify or acknowledge, that the Place towards which we bow is the Place where the moſt ſacred and ſolemn Rites of our Chriſtian Worſhip are performed; and where CHRIST, in the holy Sacrament, more eminently diſpenſes the Means of his Grace, and in a viſible Manner; but

2. I RATHER give you this Reply: That no Canon or Rubric of our Church, that I know of, enjoins this Bowing to the Communion Table; nor is there, I believe, one of our Churches in five Hundred, where this Ceremony is obſerved,

nor one Member in five Thousand of our Community, who regards it. But you must confess, that your Churches in general are adorned with Images; that worship to them is enjoin'd by your highest Authority upon Earth, and universally practised.

XXII.

You next alledge, 'the Honour and Respect 'the *Jews* had for the Name of GOD, for the 'Ark, for the Temple, for the Sanctuary, for 'the holy Vessels, *&c.*'

THIS is all quite foreign to your Purpose, except you can likewise prove, 1. That all Respect is Worship. 2. That the Name of GOD, the Ark, the Temple, the Sanctuary and holy Vessels were Images of GOD: 3. That the Ceremonial Service is still in Force, and the moral Law abolish'd; and 4, that the *Jews* did worship Images in Consistency with their Law, and without any Punishment from GOD, or Reprehensions from his Prophets; and these Points I leave you to prove at your Leisure.

XXIII.

'But now for my ACHILLES of an Argument, 'and by which I have so sadly exposed the 'Weakness of my Cause.'

THE Force of the Paragraph that follows, the Sense and Connection of it quite through I do not really understand; so that you must not expect I should answer it: But I will give it the best

Consistency and Connection I can, without altering a Letter of your Words.

I HAD charg'd you, challeng'd to it, with worshiping Images, and defended my Charge with the Authority of your own Divines, particularly JAMES NACLANTUS, COSTER the Jesuit, and THOMAS AQUINAS, or St. THOMAS, if you please.

To this you reply, 'That the Faith and 'Practice of the Church is ancienter than the 'Schoolmen; and that the Schoolmen are to 'learn their Lesson from the Christian, and by 'studying him, to compare their disagreeing Speculative Opinions.'

I TAKE you at your Word for once, and thence infer,

1. THAT by the same Rule of Reasoning, the Christian is to learn his Lesson from the Scriptures, and not from the present Church of *Rome*; the Faith and Practice deliver'd and enjoin'd in those Scriptures being much ancienter than the Faith and Practice of this Church. According to the Scriptures, religious Worship is to be paid to none but GOD;——no Exception is allow'd, no Distinctions are to be found between *Latria* and *Dulia*, between *Latria* relative and *Latria* absolute, the late Invention of your Schoolmen; but *all* Making and Worshiping of Images is strictly forbidden.

2. BY this Confession you have at once disarm'd your strongest Champions, in Defence of Popery; their Reasoning, or their Sophistry rather, being chiefly borrow'd from the Schoolmen; and thus

you have ſhewn yourſelf quite unacquainted with the uſual Defence of your Religion: I mean the Definitions and Diſtinctions of the Schools. Your great Hero, or the ACHILLES of your Cauſe, the Author of *Mercy and Truth, or Charity maintain'd by Catholics*, whom Mr. CHILLINGWORTH engag'd, cenſuring the Proteſtant Divines, ſays, 'That their Learning conſiſts only in ſome 'ſuperficial Talent of Preaching, Languages and 'Elocution, and not in any deep Knowledge of 'Philoſophy, eſpecially of Metaphyſics, and 'much leſs of *that moſt ſolid, profitable, ſubtle, 'ſuccinct Method of School-Divinity.*' The Author of theſe Words knew very well, that if the School-Divinity was laid aſide, the Cauſe of Popery was undone.

YET upon Occaſion, when the School-men make againſt you, their Authority is contemptible;——they are meer Wranglers, and no proper Guides to the plain Chriſtian. Thus you wriggle and writhe to eſcape all hold, ſhift your Poſture of Defenſe, according to the Nature of the Attack;——affirm what you have deny'd, and deny what you have affirm'd,——ſay and unſay; and not able to anſwer the Articles brought againſt you, you call them, as Mr. HARDING did of old, *certain unneceſſary School-Points, to be debated privately among the Learned, and nothing pertaining to the ſimple Capacity of the People.* However Mr. HARDING for once ſays true, as you have done, in your Cenſure of the School-men; for I believe their Diſtinctions of *Latria* and *Dulia*, between *Latria* relative and *Latria* abſolute,

abſolute, are little, if at all, underſtood *by the ſimple Capacity of the People*, who bow, kiſs and fall down to your Images, without weighing, in the Scales of School-Subtilties, what Meaſure of Honour, what juſt Proportion of Reſpect or Reverence, divine or not divine, civil or religious, relative or abſolute, terminating in the Matter, or the Shape, or the Prototype, they are to pay them.

3. AFTER all I muſt inſiſt upon what I advanced in my former Letter, 'that we might ſay 'you worſhip'd Images, without being deſtitute 'of common Honeſty, *becauſe your own Divines 'had ſaid ſo before us.*' And my Argument muſt be allow'd valid, till you can ſhew, that the Biſhop of *Clugium*, COSTER the Jeſuit and THOMAS AQUINAS were not Divines of the Church of *Rome*,——or that I have quoted their Writings falſly;——or that I could not but know with proper Enquiry, that their Works had been condemn'd or cenſured by ſome Pope or Council, or ſome ſufficient Authority of your Church, during, or ſince their Times.

4. I WOULD further obſerve, from your Conceſſions in this Place, that the Schoolmen, who were of the *Roman* Church, and of Eminence in that Church, had *diſagreeing Opinions*; whence I once more infer, that if *Unity* is a diſtinctive Mark of the true Church, as you ſay it is, then you are not That Church.

XXIV.

XXIV.

THERE is another Assertion in this Part of your Letter, which I cannot pass over without Notice. It is where you say, 'That a Christian 'is taught to love GOD above all things, and his 'Neighbour as himself, and to adore JESUS 'CHRIST, *and respect his Images.*' Pray, good Sir, where is the Christian taught to respect Images? Be pleased to name the Chapter and the Verse. The Love of GOD and of our Neighbour, and of CHRIST JESUS, is again and again enjoined; but a Respect for Images is what I never yet met with, as taught or recommended, in my reading the Bible. Had you said *a Respect for Onions*, you had said more to the Purpose; for I find not one Text in sacred Writ against a religious Respect for Onions, but hundreds against the same Respect for Images. And I believe I might, upon the Principles of Reason, much better defend my Respect and Adoration of the Workmanship of GOD, than of the Handicraft of Man.

XXV.

AFTER you had answered, in your Way, my *strong* Objection placed in the Frontispiece, and after that my ACHILLES of an Argument, you now come to my *grand* Objection.

I SAID that you made GOD in the Sacrament; and to prove what I said, quoted Pope PIUS's Creed, and an Explanation and Defence of it, called, *The Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine*; where it

it is said *that by Virtue of the Consecration* CHRIST *is there exhibited.* I add, that your *Trent* Council says the same Thing; and I believe you will not deny it to be your Doctrine, that in the Sacraments, *all depends on the Intention of the Priest:* So that, to answer my grand Objection, you have to shew, that the true, real, substantial Existence of the Body and Blood, together with the Soul and DIVINITY of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, in the Sacrament, does not depend on the Act of Consecration, and the Intention of the Priest in that Act. This you durst not say, and so proceed (an easier Way!) to asking Questions, rather than answering Objections. You ask, 'the 'Meaning of our own Catechism, wherein we 'teach that *the Body and Blood of* CHRIST *are* 'verily and indeed taken and received in the Lord's 'Supper?

1. Now had my Friend quoted fairly and fully, he had spared me the Trouble of a Reply: Sir, the Words of the Catechism are——'taken and 'received *by the Faithful* in the Lord's Supper;' and in the Exhortation in our Communion Office, it is still more fully express'd, that 'the Benefit is 'great, *if with a true and penitent Heart and lively* 'Faith, we receive the holy Sacrament; for then 'we *spiritually* eat the Flesh of CHRIST, and 'drink his Blood.'——So that CHRIST's Presence, thus admitted, is not his corporal, material (for *though*, saith the Apostle, *we have known* CHRIST *after the Flesh, yet now henceforth know we* [him] *no more**) but his mystical, spiritual, and sacramental

* 2 Cor. 5, 16.

tal Preſence; and this not owing to the meer arbitrary Act and Intention of the Prieſt, but ſuppoſes that *hearty Repentance* and *true Faith* in the Communicants, go along with his Adminiſtrations; to which Faith and Repentance, GOD, who cannot lie, hath promiſed his Grace and the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST.

2. YOU ſhould not have made this Objection to our Church Catechiſm, or quoted it as confirming your Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, becauſe you could not well but know, that the ſame Catechiſm calls the Elements *Bread* and *Wine*:——that our Rubrick, Articles of Religion and Homilies expreſly renounce your Doctrine of the corporal Preſence;——and yourſelf had acknowledg'd, (tho' with too little Preciſion) in the former Part of your Letter, 'that according 'to our Principles CHRIST is not really preſent 'in the Sacramental Bread and Wine.'

3. I WOULD only obſerve further to you, that one Reaſon, which the Fathers of the *Nicene* Council give for the Worſhip of the Image of CHRIST, is this; 'Becauſe he himſelf was not 'ſenſibly preſent with us, but only preſent as to 'his Divinity; and that he was not to remain 'with us corporally†:' By which you ſee the Doctrine of the Church of *England* confirm'd, and that of Tranſubſtantiation denied by one of your own Councils.

† Anaſtaſ. ap. Syn. Nic. 2. Act. 4. p. 305.

XXVI.

XXVI.

BUT by denying the Corporal Preſence, you would in this Place inſinuate, 'that we call in 'Queſtion the infinite Power of GOD.' So far are we from this, that we bleſs and adore it. It is only the infinite Power of Man that we would limit and reſtrain; and out of pure Reverence to GOD, are not diſpoſed to believe, that by your Act and Deed a Wafer, or a Piece of Bread, is changed into the Almighty JEHOVAH, into the high and holy One, that inhabiteth Eternity. You cannot deny the Authority which ſaith, that GOD *made Man*: Pray, Sir, produce us the ſame Authority, when you would have us believe *that Man makes* GOD.

AND here let me ask you ſeriouſly, what could provoke you to treat us, as void of common Honeſty, for ſaying (ſuppoſe we had ſaid it) 'that 'you worſhiped *made* Gods;' when you cannot deny this is your Practice, your Doctrine, and the Command of your Church, in the Adoration of the Hoſt. The Council of *Trent* expreſly aſſerts it. By this Council (which you, Sir, have ſworn to maintain) 'all faithful Chriſ-'tians are to give to this Sacrament that higheſt 'Worſhip called *Latria*, which is due to the true 'GOD; and whoever affirms otherwiſe, is by a 'Canon of that Council pronounc'd accurſed *.'

* Si quis dixerit in ſancto Euchariſtiæ Sacramento Chriſtum unigenitum Dei Filium non eſſe cultu Latriæ adorandum, atque ideo nec feſtiva peculiari celebritate venerandum, neque in Proceſſionibus ſecundum laudabilem & univerſalem ſanctæ Eccleſiæ ritum & conſuetudinem ſolenniter circum geſtandum, vel non publice ut adoretur, Populo proponendum & ejus Adoratores eſſe Idolôlatras, Anathema ſit. Summa Concil. p. 433. (2). & vi p. 421.

XXVII.

'BUT CHRIST,' you say, 'by Virtue of the 'immaculate Conception, was really present in 'the Womb of the Virgin MARY; and yet 'whosoever should thence infer, that the blessed 'Virgin *made* GOD, would be guilty of *Arian-'ism* or something worse.'

1. You are here talking at random, and quite foreign to the Subject; for let me ask you, what Protestant of the Church of *England* did you ever hear asserting that the Virgin MARY *made* CHRIST? His Conception is in our Creeds ascribed to the miraculous Influence or Operation of the Holy Ghost: The Council of *Trent*, and your Writers since that Time, do ascribe the real, Corporal Presence in the Eucharist, to the Priest's Act of Consecration †.

2. IN saying, as we do, that CHRIST was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin MARY, we have divine Authority to support us: In your asserting, that CHRIST, his Flesh and Blood, Soul and Divinity are in the Elements of Bread and Wine; or rather, that the Bread and Wine are actually changed into the Flesh and Blood, Soul and Divinity of CHRIST, you have neither Sense, nor Reason, nor Scripture on your Side.

† ——Sancta hæc Synodus declarat, *per Consecrationem* Panis & Vini, conversionem fieri totius Substantiæ Panis, in Substantiam Corporis Christi Domini nostri, & totius Substantiæ Vini, in Substantiam Sanguinis ejus. Summ. Concil. p. 431. & vi. p. 424 (2.) Can. 11.

XXVIII.

If theſe are againſt you, no Authority you can cite will at all avail you. I have therefore paſſed over your Quotations from Luther, Daille, and Dr. Phil. Nicolai: Nor were they, that I ever heard, Miniſters of the Proteſtant Church of *England*, whoſe Principles, on this Subject, I only undertook to defend. You have indeed given us an ambiguous Paſſage from Dr. Cosins, an *Engliſh* Biſhop, whom you would preſs into your Service; but I conceive he will be found none of your Friend. His Words, as quoted by you, are as follow: 'We Proteſtants (of the 'Church of *England*) neither affirm nor believe 'that the Body of Christ is abſent from the 'Sacrament; for it being given and received in 'the Communion, it muſt need be that it is pre-'ſent, *tho' in ſome Meaſure veil'd under the Sacra-'ment, ſo that of itſelf it cannot be ſeen.*' The moſt natural and obvious Senſe of theſe Words, as they ſtand here detatch'd from the Reſt of his Book (which I have no opportunity of conſulting) is, 'That the Benefits of Christ's Body 'broken, are adminiſtred in the Sacrament, and 'that his *myſtical* Body is there exhibited:'—— A Poſition which no genuine Son of the Church of *England* ever denied.

I am the more induced to believe that this was his Meaning, and that he was not in the leaſt a Favourer of your Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, from a Paper written by him to the Counteſs of *Peterborough*, containing 'The Differences in the

'chief Points of Religion, between the *Roman* 'Catholics and Us of the Church of *England*; 'together with the Agreements, which we, for 'our Parts profeſs, and are ready to embrace, 'if they, for theirs, were as ready to accord 'with us in the ſame.'

UNDER the Title *Differences* is this: 'That 'in the Sacrament of the Euchariſt, the whole 'Subſtance of the Bread is converted into the 'Subſtance of CHRIST's Body, and the whole 'Subſtance of the Wine into his Blood, ſo truly 'and properly, as that after Conſecration there 'is neither any Bread nor Wine remaining there; 'which they call Tranſubſtantiation, and impoſe 'upon all Perſons, under Pain of Damnation, to 'be believed.'

UNDER the Title of *our Agreements* are the following.

'——IN *commemorating* at the Euchariſt, the 'Sacrifice of CHRIST's Body and Blood *once* tru-'ly offered for us:——IN acknowledging his '*ſacramental*, *ſpiritual*, true and real Preſence there '*to the Souls* of all them, that come faithfully 'and devoutly to receive him, according to his 'own Inſtitution in that holy Sacrament*.'

AND in the Preface to his *Scholaſtic Hiſtory of the Canon of the holy Scripture*, after having enumerated the ſeveral new Articles of the Tridentine Faith, whereof one is, 'that in the Maſs there is 'a real Tranſubſtantiation of the Elements into 'the Body and Blood of CHRIST;' he ſays,

* Dr. Hicks's Controverſ. Tracts. Vol. 1. Append.

'All

'All these new Traditions, as they have no 'Grounds in Scripture, so have they as little 'Testimony of Antiquity to be brought for them; 'out of both which we prescribe against them 'all.'

SIR, if you want, if you are not resolved against Conviction, let me beg you would not judge of the Sentiments of the Church of *England* from *one* doubtful Passage of *one* of her Divines; but let me recommend to you what has been writ on this Subject by Arch-Bishop TILLOTSON, Bishop BULL, Dr. WHITBY, Dr. BENNET, and lately by my very learned and worthy Friend Mr. WHITFIELD of *Liverpool* †. And let me tell you, that 'tis idle to entertain us with sophistical Debates, which have been so often clear'd up to your Confusion, or to urge us with old Objections, to which sufficient Replies have been already made, and which remain unanswer'd, as I believe they are unanswerable.

XXIX.

To prove that you worshiped Images, I produced a direct Address and Invocation from your own Breviary, made to the material Cross. To this you reply, 'That the *O Crux ave*, &c. is 'really below your Notice.' And you ask me, 'Did you never hear of CICERO making an

† Essay on the Supremacy, *&c*: A Work wherein the Claims and Usurpations of the Bishop of *Rome* are, by an Historical Deduction, in the clearest Manner confuted, and other Errors of that Church, with great Learning and Ingenuity, evinced and exposed.'

'*Apostrophe*

'*Apoſtrophe* to the Earth, to the Walls, to his '*Penates*, &c.

1. SIR, there is a wide Difference between what may be proper for an artful Orator to apply to move the Paſſions of a popular Audience, and what is juſt and fit to be uttered in Prayer, in the Preſence of a wiſe and holy GOD. Remember the Words of the Preacher: 'Be not raſh with thy 'Mouth, and let not thy Heart be haſty to utter 'any Thing before GOD; for GOD is in Heaven, 'and thou upon Earth; therefore let thy Words 'be few*.'

2. SUPPOSE CICERO did addreſs his *Penates* in the Form you addreſs your Images; is this any excuſe, or rather is it not an Aggravation of your Crime? Is a Chriſtian to retain and defend Idolatry from the Examples and Authority of Heathenism? Do you find any ſuch *Apoſtrophes* made by the Saints and Servants of GOD to Idols, in ſacred Writ? You here again remind me of Mr. HARDING, who finding MOSES and the Prophets againſt him on the Subject, very judiciouſly and modeſtly cites the canonical Authority of OVID's pious Epiſtles; and lets us know from thence, 'That LAODIMIA made an Image of Wax, reſembling 'her Husband PROTESILAUS, to comfort her 'in his Abſence.' What, Sir, do you get by ſuch Apologies as theſe? Do you not hereby confirm that Paſſage in our Homilies, at which you are afterwards offended, where it is ſaid, 'That Images have been and be worſhiped in our

* Eccleſ. 5. 2.

'Times,

'Times, in like Form and Manner as were the 'Idols of the Gentiles?'——And thus you answer in one Place the Objections you have raised in another.

3. But, in Truth, the Philosopher knew better than to think it any Part of his Duty, or make it any Part of his Practice, seriously to address his Household Gods. But surely you are serious in your religious Application to the sacred Images. Cicero at other times, and when in Converse with his Friends, tells you plainly, that what was usual to be done in a *civil* Cause, was quite impertinent upon a more private and serious Occasion. *Itaque nisi ineptum putarem in tali Disputatione id facere quod cum de Republica disceptatur, fieri interdum solet, jurarem per Jovem Deosque Penates* †.

XXX.

'But if I like not *O Crux, &c.* take, say you, '*O Crucifixe: Signum pro Re signata* is passable, 'at least in Poetry.'

1. Alas, Sir, are you reduced to this wretched Shift, to make Poetry the Test of Orthodoxy, and a Figure in Rhetoric a sufficient Foundation, on which to build an Article of Faith and religious Practice? Poets, you know, were allowed to lie at Will, so they did it with Discretion. They were indeed, in some sort, Prophets and Divines of the Heathen Church; but I cannot stand

† Academ. Quest. 4. 20.

by

by their Authority, ſince *Life and Immortality are brought to light by the Goſpel.*

2. But ſhould we indulge you the Liberty of explaining by a Figure in Rhetoric ſome of your other Addreſſes;——in your Adoration of the Croſs there is not any Room for it: Pleaſe, Sir, to recollect with me, ſome of your Words:

——*Arbor una Nobilis*
Silva talem nulla profert.——
——*Flectæ Ramos Arbor alta*
Sola digna tu fuiſti
Ferre Mundi Victimam.——
——*Inter Ligna nullum tale*
Fronde, Flore, Germine.——

Here, Sir, you ſee it is not poſſible, by any Rhetorical Explication or Poetical Liberty, to make the material Tree and a crucified Redeemer, the ſacred Burden and the wooden Bearer, the ſame Thing; for you find they are really diſtinguiſh'd.

Let us make you all the Conceſſions we can, and allow your *Dulce Lignum, dulces Clavos, &c.*‡. to be figurative, and owing to the Glow of a poetic Imagination, or an inflamed Piety; (and theſe Conceſſions we might better make you, could we ſuppoſe the *Croſs* in this Service to be out of ſight) but when we ſee the Prieſt ‖ with ſo much Ceremony and Circumſtance, and a Kind of *Apotheoſis*, produce the Tree with an *Ecce Lignum*

‡ In Miſſa Votiva de ſancta Cruce.
‖ In Feria ſexta Paraſceve.

Crucis,

Crucis, and both he and the People with bended Knees adoring the Wood, can you say that your Action as well as your Language is but Figure and Metaphor?——Or must we believe that the Wood is, by a sacerdotal Juggle, *transubstantiated* into the very Body and Blood and Divinity of CHRIST JESUS? Much to this Purpose JOHN the Legate of the Eastern Patriarch, in the second Council of *Nice* openly saith: 'He that adores 'an Image of CHRIST, doth not Sin if he affirm, "This is CHRIST the Son of GOD*."' Nothing but such a Supposition can free you from the Guilt of Idolatry in adoring the Cross or any other Image of CHRIST.

3. FOR *O Crux*,' say you, 'take *O Crucifixe*.' I ask by what Authority you, Sir, can alter the Text of your Breviarys and Missals? This is an excellent Way of answering Objections, and you had better have begun with it; and told us in plain Terms, 'For *due* Worship in Pope PIUS's 'Creed, read *no* Worship; for τὰς εἰκόνας προσκυνῶ 'in the Acts of the second Council of *Nice*, take 'τὸν Θεὸν προσκυνῶ; and for τὰς εἰκόνας τὸ χριστὸ, read 'τὸν χριστὸν.' You have an equal Right to alter any other Passage in your Mass-book, to set aside the Authority of PIUS the Fifth and CLEMENT the Eighth, and where it is printed by their Order, *Sacerdos portat Crucem:—Clerici & Laici Crucem adorant:—Fit Adoratio Crucis:—Sacerdos—accedit ad adorandum Crucem*, you may

* Act. 4. 263. B.

interpose

interpose your own Authority, expunge the *Crux*, and put in it's room *Crucifixus*.

4. I WILL but add, that by the same excellent Method of Criticism and Logic, the Images of the Heathen were but *Signa pro Rebus signatis*; and CELSUS or JULIAN might with equal Truth and Justice have defended their Adoration of the Image of JUPITER O. M. by saying it was but a *Sign* of the Father of Gods and Men.

XXXI.

THUS far you have been upon the Defensive; and, like an able Champion, having stood your Ground against the Enemy's Attack, you now turn Assailant, and bear down all before you.

I HAD said, that Mr. *H.* might charge you with worshiping Images, consistent with his Principles, as a Minister of the Protestant Church of *England*, having subscribed and declared his unfeigned Assent to the thirty-nine Articles; by the thirty-fifth of which an Approbation is imply'd of the second Book of Homilies, wherein the Charge is laid of Idolatry against the Church of *Rome*.

UPON this, agreeable to your ancient Arts, you quit the Subject of Image-Worship, and fall foul upon the Articles; particularly the thirteenth, wherein, you say, 'We declare, that all the 'Actions of Infidels are Sins:' And with a peculiar Smartness you ask me, 'Suppose my House 'was set on Fire, and a *Jew*, or any other Infidel 'should knock at my Door, and call me out of 'my Bed to avoid the Flames; wou'd he by this

'be

'be guilty of a Sin? Or rather would he not be 'guilty of a great Sin, if he suffered me to sleep 'on and perish?'

To answer your Question, I must first give you the Words of the Article; which are, so far as they relate to your Objection, as follow: 'Works done before the Grace of CHRIST and 'the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant 'to GOD, for as much as they spring not of Faith 'in JESUS CHRIST;——yea rather, for that 'they are not done as GOD hath willed and com-'manded them to be done, we doubt not but 'they have the Nature of Sin.'

THIS, it seems, does by no Means relish with you, being more absurd than Popery itself; contrary to Reason, and destructive of Christian Charity.

SUPPOSE then, for Argument's sake, and to please you for once, we reverse the Sense of the Article, and directly deny what we here affirm.

OUR Assertion then must be, 'That Works 'done before the Grace of CHRIST, and the In-'spiration of his Spirit are pleasant to God, for 'as much as they spring not of Faith in JESUS 'CHRIST;——yea rather for as much as they 'are not done as GOD hath willed and command-'ed them to be done, we doubt not but they 'have the Nature of *Righteousness*.'

BY this Declaration you will assert, 'that 'without Faith it is *possible* to please GOD:—— 'That whatsoever is not of Faith, is *not* Sin: '——that GOD is the Justifier of him which be-'lieveth *not* in JESUS;——That we may *not*

'have Grace and yet ſerve GOD acceptably:——
'that all Goodneſs, Righteouſneſs and Truth is
'*not* the Fruit of the Spirit:——That we may
'be ſaved *without* the Waſhing of Regeneration,
'and the Renewing of the Holy Ghoſt:—That
'we may enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,
'*without* being born from above of the Word and
'Spirit of GOD:——In ſhort, that we may be
'the Offspring and Children of GOD, while we
'act *not* by his Spirit and do *not* after his Com-
'mandments.'

HERE you can ſee neither Abſurdity nor Impiety, though every Step you take you give the Lie to GOD's Word, blaſpheme that worthy Name by which you are called, and deny the Lord that bought you. In vain you ſacredly preſerve and reverence the wooden Image, while you thus make the very Croſs of CHRIST of none effect. *The Goſpel is* no longer *the Power of* GOD *unto Salvation unto the* Jew—*and alſo*—*unto the* Greek, if both *Jew* and *Greek* might do good Works and pleaſant unto GOD without it. If the meer natural Man can know and perform the Things of GOD, what neceſſity was, or is, there for the Revelation, Redemption and Interceſſion of CHRIST JESUS? What need for GOD's preventing or aſſiſting Grace?

IN the Beginning of your Letter, you propoſe that we ſhould appeal to human Authority. What then have you to object to that of the great St. AUGUSTINE, where he ſays, *Omnis Infidelium Vita Peccatum eſt; & nihil eſt bonum ſine ſummo bono?*

bono: Ubi enim deeſt Agnitio æternæ & incommutabilis veritatis falſa Virtus eſt etiam in optimis Moribus *? And very appoſite to our Purpoſe is that Queſtion of VINCENTIUS LIRINENSIS: 'Was not prophane PELAGIUS a Seperatiſt, who 'firſt had the Impudence to affirm Man to be ſo 'free and ſufficient of himſelf, as to ſtand in no 'need of the divine Grace, to make him good †?' Sir, the Authority of the Council of *Trent* ſhould have ſome weight with You; and it declares, *Omnes Homines, perdita in prævaricatione Adæ innocentia, factos immundos, & natura filios iræ, uſque adeo ſervos fuiſſe peccati & ſub poteſtate diaboli ac mortis, ut non modo gentes per vim Naturæ, ſed ne* Judæi *quidem per ipſam etiam literam Legis* MOSIS *inde liberari, aut ſurgere poſſent* ‡.——And in another Canon it ſaid, *Fides eſt humanæ Salutis initium, fundamentum, & radix omnis Juſtificationis, ſine qua impoſſibile eſt placere Deo, & ad filiorum ejus conſortium pervenire* §. Conſiſtently with theſe Poſitions of this Council, your own Writers tell us, 'That Faith is the Foundation and Ground-work 'of all other Virtues; without which no Man 'can pleaſe GOD: Therefore, if any one be a 'Jew, or a Heathen, or an Heretic; that is to 'ſay, be without the Catholic Faith, all his 'Works ſhall profit him no whit to Salvation ‖:' And a little after they ſay, 'That all theſe

* De vera innocen. c. 106.
† REEVE's Apolog. Vol. 2. p. 357.
‡ Summ. Concil. p. 412. (2.)
§ Summ. Concilcir. p. 415.
‖ Annotat. upon the *Rheims* Tranſlat. of the N. Teſt. Note on *Heb.* 11. 6.

'glorious

'glorious Personages (the Patriarchs) and their 'Works were commendable only through the 'Faith they had in CHRIST; without which 'Faith, none of all their Lives and Works should 'have profited them any whit; *the Gentiles doing 'many noble Acts* (as Heretics may also do) '*which are of no estimation before* GOD, *because 'they lack Faith* *.'

WAS not Sir THOMAS MORE a true Son of your Church? Yet he allows, 'That no good 'Work of Man is rewardable in Heaven of his 'own Nature, but through the meer Goodness of 'GOD, that lists to set so high a Price on so poor 'a Thing; and that this Price GOD setteth 'through CHRIST's Passion, and for that also 'they be his own Works with us; for good 'Works to God-ward worketh no Man, with-'out GOD work in him †.'

Now, Sir, if you agree with these Authorities, you swallow the shocking Absurdity, which but now gave you so much Offence; (but which, by the by, you have sworn to maintain)——if you disagree with them, I ask once more, where is your *Unity?*

AS you allow the Apocryphal Books to be Canonical, what have you to object to SOLOMON's Prayer to the Lord of Mercy, for divine Wisdom to direct his Steps aright? 'O send her out of 'thy holy Heavens, and from the Throne of thy 'Glory, that being present she may labour with

* Ibid. v. 30.

† Book of Consolation.

'me,

'me, that I may know what is pleasing unto thee:
'——So shall my Works be acceptable: ——
'Thy Counsel who hath known, except thou
'give Wisdom, and send thy holy Spirit from
'above? For so the Ways of them which lived
'on the Earth were reformed, and Men were
'taught the Things that are pleasing unto thee,
'and were saved through Wisdom *.'

ST. PAUL, speaking of Man unregenerate, saith, *There is none Righteous, no not one:—They are altogether become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one:—All have sinned and come short of the Glory of* GOD; *being justified freely by his Grace through the Redemption that is in* CHRIST JESUS †.

BUT a greater than PAUL tells us, *Without me ye can do nothing. If any abide not in me, he is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered, and Men gather them and cast them into the Fire, and they are burnt* ‡. And again, *I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No Man cometh to the Father but by me* §. If you will not believe these Authorities, will you believe your own Mass-Book? *Veni sancte Spiritus; sine tuo Numine nihil est in Homine, nihil est innoxium* ‖.

SUCH is the gross Absurdity, against which you so peremptorily exclaim——which you so magisterially condemn:——An Absurdity advan-

* Wisd. 9. v. 9, &c.
† Rom. 3.
‡ JOHN 15. v. 5, 6.
§ JOHN 14. v. 6.
‖ In Domin. Pentecostes.

ced

ced by your canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament, by CHRIST and his Apostles in the New, by your own Church, your own Councils, Commentators and Casuists.

To set you, for the Future, right in this Doctrine of Works and Justification, I would, after the Scriptures, recommend to your Perusal the Homilies of the Church of *England*, which you treat so contemptibly: You'l there find different Reasoning from your School-Divinity: You'l learn to know, what you seem at present much a Stranger to, the wretched State of sinful Man by Nature, with the infinite Goodness of GOD, display'd in the Gospel of Grace:——You'l learn that it is no Absurdity, but the most precious Truth of Heaven, *that we are saved by Faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the Gift of GOD.*

XXXII.

BUT yet you triumph in your Objection (may GOD forgive your Insult upon his sacred Truth!) and with a decisive Air pronounce and promise, 'That whosoever will shew you any Thing so 'absurd in your Religion, so contrary to Reason, 'and destructive of Christian Charity, you will 'give up the Whole.'

1. NO one need be long at a Loss to find Absurdities, both in your Doctrine and Practice: The Variety alone distracts, and may make one dubious where to begin: But I shall confine myself to our present Subject. I desire you then but to read, as follows, the Character and Conduct of

of an Idolater, as given us by ISAIAH and the *Book of Wiſdom*, 'He heweth him down Cedars, 'and taketh the Cypreſs and the Oak:——he 'planteth an Aſh:—then ſhall it be for a Man to 'burn:——he kindleth it and baketh Bread:—— 'and the Reſidue thereof he maketh a GOD, even 'his graven Image: He falleth down unto it, and 'worſhipeth it, and prayeth unto it:——For 'Health he calleth upon that which is weak; 'for Life prayeth to that which is dead; for aid 'humbly beſeecheth that which hath leaſt Means 'to help, and for a good Journey he asketh of 'that which cannot ſet a Foot forward; and for 'gaining and getting and for good Succeſs of his 'Hands, asketh Ability to do of him that is moſt 'unable to do any Thing*.'

Is there no Abſurdity in all this? Nothing contrary to Reaſon and common Senſe? And is not this your very Practice? Has it not been proved upon you; and is it not notorious, even at this Time, to any Man who has Eyes and Opportunity to ſee what is daily doing in your Churches abroad?

I MIGHT further obſerve to you, the Abſurdity of your Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation; not only in Making, but Eating your GOD: And this founded upon a Suppoſition, that the ſame GOD firſt took himſelf, held himſelf in his own Hand, eat himſelf, and drank himſelf.

THE Αὐθρωποφαγία, you cannot but know, was abhor'd and deteſted by thoſe Gentiles, who

* Isa. 44. Wiſd. 13.

had any Knowledge of Humanity and civil Manners: But the Θεοφαγία was never ſo much as mentioned, but to be laugh'd at by ſober Heathens, tho' aſſerted and maintained as an Article of Faith by GOOD CATHOLICS. According to you, we muſt be more than Savages, in order to be Saints:——Worſe than Cannibals, in order to be Chriſtians. 'This,' ſays Dr. MIDDLETON, 'was an Extravagance reſerved for 'Popery alone; and what an old *Roman* could 'not but think too groſs, even for *Egyptian* Idolatry to ſwallow, is now become the principal 'Part of Worſhip, and the diſtinguiſhing Article 'of Faith in the Creed of modern *Rome* *:' And Mr. WHITFIELD very juſtly aſſerts, 'that this 'one Abſurdity may vie with the united Force 'of all the Abſurdities of the Pagan Idolatry ſet 'together †.'

YOUR own Writers have indeed ingenuouſly confeſſed, that did their Senſes perceive, what their Faith, they ſay, doth oblige them to believe, the Horror of it would be ſo great, that almoſt all Perſons would abhor the Receiving this Sacrament ‡.

THUS you acknowledge, that you renounce your Senſes, in order to eſtabliſh your Faith, and act againſt Conviction, for GOD and Conſcience ſake.

2. BUT nothing, it ſeems, in your Religion is ſo deſtructive of Chriſtian Charity, as the Sup-

* Letter from *Rome*. p. 179.
† Eſſay on the Supremacy. p. 94.
‡ See Dr. WHITBY's Notes on MAT. 26. 26.

poſing

posing that all the Good that is done by Man proceeds from the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort. Now I have thought it an Opinion highly contributing to display the Glory and Goodness of God, and expressive of the greatest Charity to Man, to suppose that the Divine *Logos*, the Mediator, the Angel of the Covenant, has been from the first Fall of Man, endeavouring his Recovery; and that the divine Spirit, both during the Dispensations of Nature and Grace, has been working in the Children of Disobedience; and that the good Actions of the Gentile World have been effected by the Means, and accepted through the Merits of a Redeemer. And this is an Opinion, which, I conceive, neither this, nor any other Article of our Church doth contradict. Nay one of our Homilies * expressly mentions *the great Mercy and Goodness of our Saviour* CHRIST, *in suffering Death* UNIVERSALLY *for all Men:*——And again, 'But to whom did 'God give his Son? He gave him *to the whole* 'World, namely *to* ADAM, *and all that should come* 'of him.'

AN eminent Arch-Bishop of our Church, whose Authority and Sentiments upon this Subject, I never heard call'd in question by any of her Sons, thus expresses himself in the Case before us. 'Not 'that I believe that all Virtues of the Heathen 'were counterfeit and destitute of an inward Prin- 'ciple of Goodness; GOD forbid that we should 'pass so hard a Judgment upon those excellent

* Second Hom. on the Death and Passion of CHRIST.

'Men, SOCRATES, and EPICTETUS and ANTONINUS, and several others:——It is very 'credible they were——not wholly destitute of 'divine Assistance, no more than JOB——and 'CORNELIUS, who surely were very good Men, 'and accepted of GOD, tho' they were *Gentiles*, 'and *Aliens from the Common-wealth of* Israel, *and* '*Strangers from the Covenant of Promise*; but yet 'not excluded from the Blessing of the MESSIAH, 'tho' they were ignorant of him:——So that 'there is no Need so uncharitably to conclude—'that there were no good Men among the Hea-'then, and that the Brightest of their Virtues 'were counterfeit, and only in shew and Appear-'ance:——Good Men in all Ages and Nations, 'from the Beginning of the World, both before 'the Law, and under the Law, and without the 'Law, such as *feared* GOD *and wrought Righte-'ousness*, were accepted of him in *the Name*, and 'by the meritorious Sacrifice of *that Lamb of* GOD, 'which in Respect of the Virtue and Efficacy of 'it, is said to have been *slain from the Foundation* '*of the World* *.' And another of our Bishops, in an Exposition of these very Articles you object to, tells us, 'that instead of stretching the 'Severity of GOD's Justice, in Relation to this 'Argument, we may rather venture to extend 'the Bounds of his Mercy; since this is the at-'tribute, which, of all others, is the most mag-'nificently spoken of in the Scriptures †.'

* Arch-Bishop TILLOTSON's Posthum. Works. Vol. II. p. 159, &c.

† Bishop BURNET.

BUT

BUT if you are diſpoſed to take Things more rigorouſly, and to make the Articles ſpeak in the harſheſt Strain, ſtill your moral *Jew*, and your Infidel, who have wanted the proper Means of Chriſtian Conviction, are left by us to the uncovenanted Mercies of GOD, and the Chriſtian Scheme taught, as only abſolutely neceſſary to Chriſtian Salvation. This you might have known, had you been but moderately acquainted with the Writings of Proteſtant Divines. I particularly refer you to Mr. Arch-Deacon LAW's *Conſiderations on the State of the World, with Regard to the Theory of Religion* *; where you will find, how great is our Charity on this Subject. I mention this learned Gentleman in Particular, as his Diſcourſes were preach'd before the Univerſity of *Cambridge*, and have, in a ſhort Time, had two Impreſſions.

THUS we allow the Heathens Salvation; while you good Catholics, ſuch is your Charity, deny it to thoſe, who embrace GOD's revealed Will, and aſſent to every Article of the Goſpel of CHRIST. We cannot indeed admit of Additions, clean contrary to that pure Faith once delivered to the Saints; and for this our heretical Obſtinacy, we muſt be excommunicated here and damn'd hereafter:——Conſign'd over to Fire and Faggot, to general Maſſacrees and Executions in this World, and to the eternal Flames of Hell in the next. You ſurely, Sir, have forgot the *Anathemas* of the *Trent* Council; by which the greateſt

* P. 191, &c.

Part

Part of the Chriſtian World has ſo long ſtood, and to this Day ſtands, accurſed. Such is your Charity, your boaſted Charity, ſo far exceeding the Meaſures of Proteſtant Moderation and leſs flaming Zeal.

YOURSELF have allow'd, in thus freely cenſuring our Article, and thinking it beſt to have it expung'd, 'That Works done before Grace, be-'fore the Inſpiration of GOD's Spirit, and without 'Faith, are pleaſant to God;——and tho' not 'done as GOD hath willed and commanded them 'to be done, yet you doubt not but that they 'have *not* the Nature of Sin:'——But for us Proteſtants, who declare that we have no Salvation but through CHRIST: For us, who acknowledge the Will of GOD for the Rule of our Obedience, and profeſs that we have ~~do~~ no Sanctification but by the Spirit, no Redemption but by the Blood of CHRIST:——For us, it ſeems, there is no Hope, no Poſſibility to be ſaved; and let JEWEL live an Angel's Life, yet JEWEL is an Heretic *.

THUS, Sir, without ranging at large in the wide Field of Popiſh Superſtition and Bigotry, I think I have ſhewn both Abſurdity and Want of Charity in your Religion, greater than what you unhappily imagin'd you ſaw in this Article: And now if you are a Gentleman of your Word, I expect you will give up the Whole.

* The Dean of his College uſed to ſay, 'I ſhould love thee JEWEL, 'if thou wert not a *Zuinglian*: In thy Faith I hold thee a Heretic, but 'ſurely in thy Life thou art an Angel; thou art very good and honeſt, 'but a *Lutheran*.' Life of Biſhop JEWEL prefix'd to his Works. p. 3.

XXXIII.

You next proceed to object to our Homilies; particularly to that Paſſage, where it is ſaid, 'That both Laity and Clergy, learned and unlearned, all Ages, Sects and Degrees of Men, Women and Children of whole Chriſtendom, have been at once drowned in abominable Idolatry, and that for the Space of eight Hundred Years and more.' And you conclude your Quotation with a 'Well ſworn young Parſon!'

1. Insolence and ill Manners become no Cauſe: They diſgrace Truth itſelf; and are commonly call'd in to recommend Falſhood, which has moſt Need of ſuch Support. The Homily is not ſwore to, nor any Article or Homily of the Church of *England*. Do you not here betray yourſelf, Sir? Was it not your own Method of Swearing to the *Trent* Council, which made you imagine that the ſame ſpiritual Tyranny was exerciſed in the Church of *England*?

2. But you will ſay, that I defended the Charge of Idolatry againſt the Church of *Rome*, made by a Miniſter of the Church of *England*, from his having ſubſcribed to the Article containing an Approbation of this Homily. I did ſo; and quoted at large that Part of the Homily, on which I laid the Streſs, and particularly mark'd that Part of the Quotation, by a Raſure under the Words which I thought full to my Purpoſe; *viz.* 'That popiſh Images *be worſhiped in our* 'Time in like Form and Manner, as were the 'Idols of the Gentiles:——that our Image-

'Maintainers

'Maintainers have had *and have* the ſame Opi-'nions and Judgments of Saints, whoſe Images 'they have made and worſhiped, as the Gentile 'Idolaters had of their Gods:——have uſed *and* '*uſe* the ſame outward Rites.'

So that by making good what is here aſſerted, *viz.* your preſent Idolatry, I proceed far enough to juſtify the Charge brought againſt you.

3. But ſhould you demand a further Proof of the whole Quotation produced, and——that you *have had*——*have uſed* Images, *&c.* you ſpare me the Trouble, ſeeing yourſelf have taken an imaginary Advantage of a Conceſſion I made you, and gloried in it, *viz.* 'That Images have been 'in Uſe ſince the *Nicene* Council, and conſequent-'ly ſubſiſted, ſay you, *many hundred Years* be-'fore the Reformation;' *i. e.* before either Homilies or Articles were compiled. Thus you clear up in one Part of your Letter, what you object in another, and are unhappily your own Executioner.

4. But the Term *eight hundred Years and more*, is, I preſume, what ſhocks you, as too long and extenſive.

I am deſirous to give you all the Satisfaction I can, in Reſpect to this obnoxious Paſſage; and I do this the more willingly, as I find it has been made the moſt of, in a ſilly *Paper** wrote by ſome of your Communion, which (notwithſtanding the Apprehenſions you expreſs, in your laſt Letter, of

* A *Roman* Catholic's Reaſons why he cannot conform to the Proteſtant Religion.

Penal

Penal Laws in Case you should answer me in print) has been printed and industriously dispersed throughout the Kingdom.

Be it observ'd then by you, that the Articles of Religion, which approve the second Book of Homilies, were not agreed upon by the Clergy in Convocation, till the Year 1562. The Empress Irene called the Council of *Nice* in the Year 786: So that between these Periods there passed no less than 776 Years. If we go back to about the Year 739, we find J. Damascenus the *Syrian* writing in Defence of Images, and Pope Gregory the Third, and the *Roman* Clergy, in a Synod held at *Rome* Anno 732, by a solemn Sentence, depriving Leo the Emperor of his Kingdoms, and of the Communion of the Faithful, for not admitting Images; which Example of Gregory and the *Italian* Bishops, the other Bishops of *Rome* have, I believe, since that time in general follow'd, and, as our Homily expresses it, *gone through with all most stoutly.*

So that reckoning from 732 to 1562, we have the Church of *Rome* maintaining Images *for eight hundred Years and more.*

But suppose you reckon only from the Council of *Nice*, you will find but very few Years wanting of the Number assigned in the Homily; and the Author seems to have had both Periods in his Eye; for in another Part of the Homily, he mentions the World drown'd in Idolatry by the Space of *about* eight Hundred Years *, and by

* P. 57.

the Space of *a sort of hundred Years* †. By which Passages he shews a pretty exact Knowledge of the first Rise and future Progress of Image-Worship.

5. But still the *Roman* Church, you may say, does not include *whole Christendom*; (tho' at other Times you are ready enough to tell us so) the Phrase is too general and comprehensive: You have particularly mark'd as offensive and obnoxious the Words, *all Ages*, and, *Young Children.*

Now, Sir, I am not for defending what appears to me not defensible: I freely confess to you, that it does not seem to me exactly true, that *whole Christendom* was drown'd in abominable Idolatry, during the Term of eight hundred Years, or even since the Council of *Nice*; for tho' the *French*, the *German* and the *English* Churches had Pictures in their Places of public Worship, for Decoration and Instruction of the People, yet they condemned the Worship of them for a long Time after that Council; as appears from the second Canon of the Council of *Franckfort*, the *Caroline* Books, the Council of *Paris* Anno 824, and Agobardus Bishop of *Lyons*, *de Imaginibus*, in the Time of Ludovicus Pius about the Year 829 and afterwards. So that the Expression *whole Christendom* can only be design'd to describe the general Prevalency of this Corruption: If it means more, it is a Mistake; and the Church of *England* never pretended to Infallibility. But the Author of the Homilies, if a Writer may be

† P. 63.

allow'd

allow'd to explain his own Meaning, ſeems to have thought the Terms too general; and has, I think, in the next Paragraph ſubjoin'd a Limitation; allowing it 'to be poſſible in ſome one City or 'little Country to have Images ſet up in Temples 'and Churches, and yet Idolatry, by earneſt and 'continual Preaching of GOD's true Word and 'the ſincere Goſpel of our Saviour CHRIST, may 'be kept away for a ſhort Time.'

6. THE Term *all Ages* is very juſtifiable, if you will allow us to explain our own Homilies, conſiſtently with the Rules of Charity and Grammar. According to theſe we ſay, that *ſome*, not *all* Perſons of all Ages, *i. e.* of both old and young, have been carried away by the prevailing Corruption.

7. NOT ſo, ſay you: *He ſhould by right have excepted Children not attained to the uſe of Reaſon.*

SURELY, Sir, you cannot imagine, without expoſing your own Ignorance of Scripture, that the Author of the Homilies intended to include Infants, not attained to the Uſe of Reaſon. This Senſe, I apprehend, could enter into no Man's Head, but that of one who is obliged to argue againſt common Senſe in Support of Tranſubſtantiation. Why do you not object, for you have equal Reaſon, to that of MOSES: 'Gather 'the People together, Men and Women and '*Children*, and thy Stranger that is within thy 'Gates, that they may learn and fear the Lord 'your GOD, and obſerve to do all the Words of 'this

'this Law *:——Or to that of JOSHUA, where it is said, 'That there was not a Word of all that 'MOSES commanded, which JOSHUA read not 'before all the Congregation of *Israel*, with the 'Women, and *the little ones* and the Strangers 'that were conversant among them †.' Should not the sacred Writers, according to you, have excepted those not attained to the Use of Reason?

YOU will further recollect, that *the little Children* (παιδάρια μικρά) of *Bethel*, a Place where JEROBOAM erected one of the Golden Calves to draw the Children of *Israel* to Idolatry, and where he built an House of high Places, and raised an Altar to sacrifice unto the Calves that he had made,——these *little Children*, I say, educated no doubt in the Idolatry of their Parents (for the Image of the Golden Calf had now continued among them upwards of seventy Years) were forty-two of them, by a special Judgment of Heaven, devoured or tore for mocking of ELISHA the Prophet of the true GOD ‡. Now, according to your Way of Reasoning and Objecting, He, *i. e.* GOD, *by right should have excepted those at least not attained to the Use of Reason.*

8. BUT let what has been hitherto said in Defence of the Homily pass for nothing: Suppose, if you please, the whole Passage you here quote and object to, to be a Mistake, nay a Falshood and indefensible, no Clergyman's Character, who

* Deutr. 31. 12.
† Josh. 8. 35.
‡ 2 Kings ch. 2. 23, 24.

subscribes

subscribes and declares his Assent to the Articles, is thereby at all affected. The thirty-fifth Article says, that the second Book of Homilies 'doth contain a godly and wholesome *Doctrine*, 'and necessary for these Times.' Now pray, Sir, does the Term *Doctrine* imply a Matter of Fact, or rather an Object of Faith, or Lesson of Practice? Are *historical Truth* and *wholesome Doctrine* synonimous and convertible Terms? When a Deist affects to say, that he allows of the *Moral* of CHRIST, does he thereby assert his Belief of the *miraculous Works* of the Son of GOD, and of the *whole Gospel History?* Should you affirm, that there are many *wholsome Lessons of civil Prudence* in PLUTARCH's Lives, could I with any Manner of Decency or common Honesty thence deduce, that you asserted, nay swore to, the Truth of every *historical Fact* related in PLUTARCH?

HENCE, Sir, you see how the Writer of the *Paper* above-mentioned has imposed upon you, in furnishing you with this Objection; and how weak and senseless his Calumny is, when he adds, 'that this [Passage] is the main Foundation of 'the Protestant Church *.' The main Doctrine which this Homily undertakes to defend, is *That the Worship of Images is Idolatry*; which in itself is plain and true, as that GOD and his Word are true; altho' the particular Passage you object to, which does not relate directly to the Doctrine, should prove to be erroneous; and I might have contented myself with

* Rom. Cathol. Reasons. 2.

justifying

juſtifying Mr. *H.* as acting conſiſtent with his Character, as a Miniſter of the Proteſtant Church of *England*, in ſaying (had he ſaid it) 'that 'you worſhiped Images,' by referring you to the twenty-ſecond Article of Religion, which he ſubſcribed, and wherein the *Romiſh* Doctrine of Worſhiping and Adoration of Images is ſo juſtly and truly cenſured.

XXXIV.

YOUR next Exception to the Homily has ſome Relation to the Doctrine, and conſequently to our Approbation of it by ſubſcribing the Articles; and could you make good your Objection, I ſhould think we do wrong in approving the Homily, which ſays, 'That Popiſh Images and 'the Idols of the Gentiles are all one concerning 'themſelves, and that you worſhip your Images 'as the Gentiles did their Idols?

To this you reply, 'That you think the 'Gentiles eſteemed their Idols as Gods, and wor-'ſhiped them as ſuch, but you do not eſteem your 'Images as Gods, nor worſhip them at all in our 'Senſe of the Word *Worſhip.*'

1. THE Gentiles did not eſteem their Idols as Gods: The Wiſeſt of them at leaſt had very different Sentiments (whatever the Mob might have among them, as among you) and never look'd on their Images as any other than Symbols or Repreſentations of that Being, to whom they gave Divine Worſhip. The Words of EUSEBIUS, whoſe Authority, as he was a Chriſtian Biſhop

and

and of eminent Learning, are worth your Notice: 'It is manifeſt, ſays he, even to themſelves, *i. e.* the Heathen, that their lifeleſs Images are not Gods*.' The famous *Roman* Annaliſt makes AGRIPPINA thus Philoſophize; *——non in Effigies mutas Divinum Spiritum tranſfuſum* †; and thus CICERO confeſſes, JOVEM *Lapidem, non eſſe Deum.* The Heathens, when hard preſſed by the primitive Chriſtians on the Subject of Image-Worſhip, ſtill denied that they believ'd theſe Images to be real Gods: They adored not, they ſaid, the Wood, the Braſs, Gold or Silver, as if theſe Metals were of themſelves Gods; but they worſhiped the Gods, who by Virtue of the Conſecration or Dedication, inhabited theſe Images ‡. It is remarkable in the Council of *Nice*, that when one of the Fathers accuſed the Heathens of Idolatry, as honouring their Images as Gods, they utterly denied this, and ſolemnly affirmed, that they only worſhiped thoſe incorporeal Beings, which the Images repreſented; and therefore they came off as well as theſe Fathers, who ſay, 'They do not make the 'Image of CHRIST, to worſhip the Image it'ſelf, but that the Mind, ſeeing it, may fly to 'Things above ||.' I think there is ſcarce one Argument you make uſe of, in Defence of your Images, which the Heathen did not apply to the Support of their Idols: They ſaid, as you ſay,

* See STILLINGFLEET's Idolat. of the Ch. of *Rome*. p. 65.
† TACIT. Ann. 4. 52.
‡ See MILLAR's Hiſt. of the Propagation of Chriſtianity. Vol. 1. p. 236.
‖ Preſervat. againſt Popery. Vol. 2. Tit. 6. P. 297.

that

that they were Instruction for the Ignorant, Signs of divine Honour, and Helps to the Remembrance;——and which serv'd to represent Things invisible, by what was visible:——That they were as Letters, which did instruct them in the Worship of God:——That they did not worship them, but by them the Godhead——the Represented, and not the Representee, and from the Type ascended to the Prototype *.

Are not your Images and the Idols of the Gentiles *all one concerning themselves*:——Alike *the Work of Men's Hands, Wood and Stone, which neither see nor hear, nor eat nor smell* †? There is no Difference, but in the Name: What was an ancient Demigod, you have dubb'd a modern Saint ‡.

Thus, Sir, you see that you cannot acquit yourselves, but by the same Arguments which will clear the Heathens; and if you are not criminal in your Practice, so neither were they.

2. In vain then you tell us, *That you do not worship Images at all, in our Sense of the Word* Worship. Enough has been already said, in the former Part of this Letter, to prove the Practice upon you, and to shew that *all* Worship of Images is unlawful and unscriptural. You very well know, that the highest Authority of your Church enjoins the Worship of them, and peremptorily bestows a Curse upon those

* Vid. Prefervat. Tit. 6. P. 255, 266.

† Deutron. ch. 4. v. 28.

‡ See Dr. Middleton's Letter from *Rome*. p. 159, 163, *&c.*

who

who deny, or ſo much as doubt about this Adoration. 'Tis in vain you make a Noiſe about the Word *Worſhip*. While it remains a Part of the ſecond Commandment, it muſt condemn you. You had better do as BONNER Biſhop of *London* did, in his Inſtructions to his Dioceſe in 1555, for the Words *Worſhip them*, order to be read, *Nor adore them with GOD's Honour* *. But what a ſad Degree of Apoſtacy from GOD's Truth is this; when you cannot juſtify your Practice without altering the divine Commandments:—When your Conduct muſt be made the Meaſure of the Law of GOD, and not the Law of GOD the Meaſure of your Conduct?

AFTER all, Facts are plain Things, ſpeak for themſelves, and will ever be too ſtrong for Chicane and Sophiſtry; and I muſt give up my Senſes and my Underſtanding, if I can ſee you moſt exactly conforming to Pagan Rites, and at the ſame Time abſolve you from Pagan Idolatry.

FOR inſtance, when I ſee your Churches equipp'd like the Heathen Temples, Incenſe breathing, Lamps burning, your Altars and Images with votive Offerings hanging round them:——When I hear your Addreſſes to the Saints (the Prototypes of many of your Images) as to ſubordinate Deities and Mediators between GOD and Man, your Prayers and Praiſes to them for

* Hiſtory of the Reform. abridg'd. Vol. 3. p. 218.

Health,

Health, Safety, Success, &c†.——When I read the forg'd Miracles ascribed to your Images, as they were to the Pagan Idols: When I hear of your carrying, and dancing round these Images of your Saints in your Processions, to Singing and Music: When I behold them array'd in costly Apparel, and deck'd with precious Stones: When I find them not only in your Churches, but in Groves, in high Places, in High-ways, and in the Corners of your Streets:——When I behold you bowing to them, prostrate before them and devoutly Worshiping them: Can I, notwithstanding all this, renounce my Eyes, and Ears, and Reason; and say, that tho' these are the very same Things that were practised by the Heathens, yet they are not heathenish; and that the *Romanists* may be reputed Saints in doing That for which the *Pagans* were condemn'd as Sinners?

But I need not enlarge in Proof of this Part of the Homily, 'That you do worship your

† The old Dæmons of Paganism, it is well known, had each their distinct Provinces or Præfectures: And thus we are told, that the present Inhabitants of *South Guinea* have each of them, Men and Women, their peculiar Idols; one for a happy Delivery, when with Child, another for the Head-ach, another for the Fever or Ague; others for venereal Diseases, for the Worms; to preserve them from being drown'd, and from Robbers——for preventing Storms in their Voyages at Sea, and so *ad infinitum* for or against all the Casualties that attend humane Nature. Churchill's *Voyages*, Vol. 5. p. 315. Thus among the *Romanists* abroad, it is well known that they have different Saints to recur to in their different Exigencies: Their Number is astonishing; some they have made Protectors of their Corn, Cattle, Hawking, Hunting, and even of their unlawful Pleasures: St. Ignatius of *Loyola* is the Protector of those that are with Child, and of Women given to their Pleasure: Some preside over particular Countries, Cities, Societies, and even the different Trades of Men; others over the several Diseases of the Body or the Mind; others over the Winds, &c.

'Images,

'Images, as the Heathens did their Idols.' The Homily itſelf has effectually and undeniably prov'd it; and it appears a little Strange, that you ſhould object to the Aſſertion, without taking the leaſt Notice of, or framing any Exception againſt the Proof. For your further Satisfaction in this Point, I would recommend to your Peruſal Monſ. DE CROY G. ARTH's Book, entitled, *The three Conformities*, or, *The Harmony of the* Romiſh *Church with Gentiliſm*; and Dr. MIDDLETON's *Letter from* Rome, with the *Prefatory Diſcourſe* annex'd to it: A Book, which if you had read without Prejudice, I am perſuaded you would have ſaved both yourſelf and me this Trouble.

XXXV.

'BUT if you are Idolaters, how came our 'Anceſtors, you ask, to have Recourſe to an 'idolatrous Church for Conſecration?'

You might, Sir, as well ask, why in dividing Stocks and diſſolving Partnerſhip with a bad Aſſociate, I choſe, in ballancing Accounts, to accept from him good Money and reject the bad he offer'd me, and in which he was uſed to deal? Or, how I could think of him otherwiſe than as an honeſt Man, becauſe the Caſh I receiv'd from him was good? You might as well ask, Why Chriſt and Chriſtians received from the *Jewiſh* Church the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, and did not at the ſame Time embrace the Traditions of their Rabbis and the Dreams of their Talmudiſts?

To make the Caſe more plain: A Parent leaves by Teſtament an Eſtate, and by it a ſufficient Proviſion for his Children; but appoints Guardians in Truſt for the Adminiſtring ſome Part of this Proviſion; gives them a ſpecial Commiſſion to this Purpoſe, and inveſts them with a legal Title to the Eſtate. They for ſome Time diſcharge their Truſt faithfully, by a ſtrict adherence to the Teſtator's Will; but by degrees they degenerate: They deprive the Children of a Part, and a very material Part of the Proviſion left them: They clog the Will with new Conditions, and oblige their Wards to Principles and Practices, ſome quite foreign, and ſome clean contrary to the Intention and even the expreſs Words of the Teſtator. The Children advance in Age, and at laſt get a ſight of the Will, which had for ſome Time been ſecreted from them, and ſee with ſorrow the Shameleſs Violation of it, which they had been led into. A favourable Opportunity is offered by Providence to throw off all unjuſt Conditions and illegal Terms, to which they had been hitherto obliged to ſubmit by the Power and Policy of their former Guardians; who, they find, had inveſted others with as good a Title to the Eſtate, as they themſelves had. The Children henceforth act under the Guidance and Guardianſhip of theſe legal Subſtitutes, who make the Teſtator's Will the profeſs'd Rule of their Conduct.

Now, Sir, it would be with a very ill Grace, the former Guardians ſhould reproach the Children

dren with having deserted their Guidance and Directions; and it would surely be dishonourable to expect that their first Title to the Estate, should give them a Power to impose the most unreasonable and unjust Conditions upon the Children: And to ask them, why they allow'd of their (*i. e.* the Guardians) original Right, and did not at the same Time embrace all their subsequent Impositions, would be the same Thing, as to ask, why they did not sacrifice their Conscience and their Interest to the arbitrary Will of faithless Men: ——Why they chose to follow Truth and Law, without the Mixture of Falshood and Injustice? Why they were willing to avail themselves of a Power to do Right, and did not rather desire to continue in the Wrong? The Power in the original Guardians and Constituents, and in their legal Substitutes and Successors, is allow'd to be the same; the only Difference then remaining is, That the Abuse of it by the Former, and the proper Use made of it by the Latter, must reflect Shame upon the *one* and Glory upon the *other*.

If you are desirous of further Satisfaction in this Point, I refer you to Dr. Hicks's *Controversial Letters* *, and to Bishop Stillingfleet's *Answer to the several Treatises occasioned by his Discourse concerning the Idolatry of the Church of* Rome †.

* Vol. 2. p. 34, 206.
† Gen. Pref. to Part 1.

XXXVI.

XXXVI.

You next ſay, 'That the Curate, in charging you with worſhiping Images, had a whole Catalogue of Proteſtant Divines, and thoſe aſſembled in Council, againſt him; and conſequently clearing you from the Charge of Idolatry.'

I TOLD you, I was a Stranger to that Council, tho' myſelf a Proteſtant Divine; and expected from you, that you would have directly named it: But I find you are a prudent Man: It is certainly a wiſer Part to ſtifle Evidence, which upon croſs examining may betray or injure our Cauſe, than to produce it.

You have here, I confeſs, put me to no ſmall Trouble, in finding out this famous Council. I recollected, with ſome Care, the moſt memorable Periods of our Hiſtory ſince the Reformation, and conſulted ſuch Writers as I thought could not have omitted ſo remarkable a Tranſaction: But my Labour was all in vain. Conſcious of my own Inabilities, I conſulted ſome learned Friends upon the Occaſion, but with no better Succeſs: And where was the Wonder; for how ſhould they find what never had a Being? As I was defending the Sentiments and Conduct of a Proteſtant Miniſter of the Church of *England*, I imagined naturally enough, that this Council, with which you confronted me, had been in a great Meaſure compoſed of our own Divines; or at leaſt, that they had been admitted to a Seat in this Proteſtant Council, and had joined in the Declaration

claration you mention. But how great was my Surprize, to find that you had been all this while amuſing me with the Deciſion of the Faculty at *Helmſtadt*, an univerſity of *Lutherans?* Your Record for this Anecdote is a common News-Paper, the *Poſt Boy* of *July* 1, 1708, now tack'd to a moſt groſs Heap of Folly and Falſhood, which, I find, you are at this Time communicating to your Neighbours, for their Edification in Chriſtian Truth and Knowledge. With this *Lutheran* Deciſion I have nothing to do, as a Miniſter of the Church of *England*; and the Weakneſs and Fallacy of it has, I doubt not, been ſufficiently expoſed: But I cannot help obſerving, 1. That the Occaſion of it (the Princeſs of *Wolfenbuttle*'s Marriage with CHARLES III, King of *Spain*) gives great Room to ſuſpect, that the Intrigues of a Court had more influence upon the Deciders than the Inſpiration of Heaven: 2. That you are not hereby clear'd from the Imputation of Idolatry; for it is ſomething remarkable, that in reciting the Objections, which the Faculty ſuppoſe might be made to their Deciſion, they carefully paſs over Image-Worſhip, and other Enormities of the *Roman* Church: What they mainly aſſert is, 'That the '*Foundation* of Religion ſubſiſts in the *Roman* 'Catholic Church;' and ſeem to take it for granted, that no Antichriſtian Superſtructure had been added to that Foundation. Nay they declare further, that the Princeſs 'was to make no 'formal Abjuration——That controverted Points 'were not to be impoſed upon her,——and that 'her

'her Buſineſs only was *to continue in the Simplicity* 'of the Faith.' 3. The Deciſion of this particular Caſe, is ſo far from being the Reſult of a proper Proteſtant Council, or agreeable to Proteſtant Principles, that your Record tells you, *it had given juſt offence to moſt of the Proteſtants abroad.*

XXXVII.

But your Modeſty and Logic, on this Occaſion, are really admirable. This Council or Catologue of Proteſtant Divines, which you are ſo very ſhy of Naming, is, it ſeems, of Moment and Authority ſufficient to clear you from the Charge of Idolatry, while the Arch-Biſhop and Biſhops of the upper Houſe, and the whole Clergy of the nether Houſe of Convocation, who confirm'd, by their Subſcription, the thirty-nine Articles, are of no Manner of Conſideration or Weight, 'As being under Reſtrictions, and who 'had proved themſelves an odd ſort of People; 'and had beſides a Woman Pope to head them; 'which, you ſay, will certainly make an odd 'Figure in the Eyes of Poſterity.'

Surely, Sir, if you had known any Thing of the Hiſtory of Councils and Popes, you would have forbore to touch upon this Subject; as it opens a Scene ſo black, ſo infamous, and ſo reproachful to your Cauſe, and to your Church.

'Your boaſted general Councils,' ſays a learned Writer, 'however unreſtrained from with-'out, fell under the Bondage of their own Cor-'ruptions, overawed by Threatnings, perverted

'by

'by promises, purchased by Pensions from *Rome*; 'and consequently possessed Nothing but a Phantom of Liberty, to delude the World with a 'Belief, that their Decrees in Compliance with 'the Suggestions from the Conclave, were the 'Result of free Consultations amongst the Fathers, guided and assisted by the Operations of 'the Holy Spirit.——So that to charge undue Confinement on Protestant Councils, and 'assert the Freedom and Regularity of Popish 'Councils——is to write with a Pen superior to 'the Force and Power of Evidence *.'

But, to confine myself to the present Subject, let me ask you, Sir, Who was it that, maugre the Opposition of several, *caused it to be decided* (they are your own Dupin's Words) 'that I-'mages might be had and honoured?' Was it not Pope Irene, the most abominable of Women, not to be parallel'd for Ambition and Cruelty who murder'd her own Son and usurped his Empire? ——Be ashamed of talking of Restraints upon the Convocation, while it remains upon Record, that at this Council, where Idolatry was first established by Law, the Empress's Guards kept the *Iconoclasts* from entering the Council, and herself undertook to put the Constitutions of it in Force.

How different was this from your Case, with Respect to this very Reign which you accuse? ——Were you excluded from any Admission, De-

* Dr. Reynolds's Histor. Essay on the Government of the Church of *England*. p. 227, 153.

bate, or Argument in Defence of your Cause? Nay were you not invited to a free Conference in 1559, a little before the Articles were confirmed, but had the Modesty to decline it †?

As to the Restrictions, you mention, which the Convocation lay under, 'So remote,' says the learned Writer just now quoted, 'was undue 'Restraint from the Maxims of this Reign, that 'the Synod was favoured with frequent Licences 'from the Queen to treat, debate, and conclude; 'and as they made no Scruple to address the 'Queen upon proper Occasions, so her Majesty 'was pleased to receive their Addresses graciously, 'upon Points that were not agreeable to the Taste 'of the Court ‡.'

With Respect to the Queen's Popedome, it should be remember'd, that she interfered no further in the Determinations about Religion, than had been the Custom, and deemed the Right of Christian Princes, in the early Ages of the Church; such as Constantine, Thodosius, and Valentinian ||. 'The same Power,' an eminent Prelate tells us, 'the Christian Emperors 'of old assumed unto themselves, to convocate 'Synods, to preside in Synods, to confirm Synods, to establish Ecclesiastical Laws, to receive 'Appeals, to nominate Bishops, to eject Bishops, 'to suppress Heresies, to compose Ecclesiastical 'Differences, in Councils, out of Councils, by

† See Dr. Reynolds.

‡ Dr. Reynolds, p. 171, and see Trapp's Church of *England* defended, in Answer to *England*'s Convers. and Reform. compar'd. p. 352.

|| See Dr. Reynolds, p. 5.

'themselves,

'themſelves, by their Delegates: All which is 'as clear in the Hiſtory of the Church, as if it 'were written with a Beam of the Sun *.'

You might, Sir, have been further inform'd by Hiſtory, that Queen ELIZABETH diſliked the Style of *Head of the Church*; as being due, ſhe ſaid, only to CHRIST; and that ſhe took order in her firſt Parliament, to have it left out of her Title.

I THINK then, upon the whole, it had been as Prudent if you had ſaid nothing about this Petticoat Pope, as it naturally recalls to our Memory her immediate Predeceſſor MARY *the Merciful*: She it was that ſummoned the Convocations by her Writ, with the Title of *Supreme Head of the Church*; and with Reluctance laid it aſide, for political Reaſons (as there is Room to conjecture) after ſome Years Poſſeſſion. The Convocation, during her Reign, did nothing worth mentioning. The Reſtoration of Popery was effected by Court Intrigue and Parliamentary Deciſion. And what a Parliament was this, which enacted the Form of the Public Worſhip, reſtored the Maſs, and re-eſtabliſh'd Croſſes and Images? We are told by Hiſtory, 'that beſides the ordinary 'Ways made uſe of by Kings, to have Parlia-'ments at their Devotion, all ſorts of Artifices, 'Frauds and even Violences were put in Prac-'tice to carry their Elections for this Parliament 'in favour of the Court. As Care was before 'taken to change the Magiſtrates in the Cities

* By BRAMHALL's Anſ. to Monſ. de la MILLETIERE. p. 39.

and

'and Counties, and not one almoſt left in either, 'who was not a *Roman* Catholic, or had promiſed 'to become one, every Deſign was countenanced 'which was in order to have the Returns on that 'Side. On the Contrary, thoſe who were ſuſ-'pected of leaning to the Proteſtant Cauſe, were 'diſcouraged by Menaces, by Actions, by Im-'priſonments on the moſt frivolous Pretences. In 'ſeveral Places Things were carried with ſuch 'Violence, that Proteſtants were not allow'd to 'aſſiſt in Aſſemblies where Elections were to be 'made. In ſhort, in Places where it was not 'poſſible to go to work ſo avowedly, by Rea-'ſon of the Superiority of the Reformed, the 'Sheriffs devoted to the Court made falſe Re-'turns *.'

Here, Sir, you ſee no Reſtrictions; the Men concerned prove themſelves an honeſt Sort of Peo-ple; and the pious Princeſs, her Arms adorned with Racks and Gibbets, her Creſt emblazon'd with Blood and Flame, will certainly make *a glorious Figure in the Eyes of Poſterity.*

There is now remaining but one Part of your Letter, which I have left unanſwer'd; and That muſt remain ſo for me: I mean thoſe Flowers of Rhetoric, thoſe genteel Apellations, which you have beſtowed upon the whole Body of the eſtabliſh'd Clergy; either as Proofs of your Politeneſs, or Specimens of your Modeſty, or Tokens of your Gratitude for that Lenity and

* Rapin's Hiſt. of *Eng.* Vol. 8. p. 139. Ed. *Dub.*

Forbearance

Forbearance with which you are indulg'd by that Government, whoſe Miniſters you revile. Theſe, I ſay, I muſt leave unanſwer'd; for my Religion teaches me not to return Railing for Railing, but contrarywiſe Bleſſing. I therefore leave you in full and peaceable Poſſeſſion of your *hard Names*, to be applied, for Want of Argument, to your future Occaſions: And I pray GOD to give you the Spirit of Wiſdom, of Love, and of a ſound Mind.

I am, Sir, &c.

T. H.

F I N I S.

BRITAIN's

REMEMBRANCER.

BEING

Some Thoughts on the proper Improvement of the preſent Juncture.

The Character of this Age and Nation.

A brief View, from Hiſtory, of the Effects of the Vices which now prevail in *Britain*, upon the greateſt Empires and States of former Times.

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Some Hints, ſhewing what is in the Power of the ſeveral Ranks of People, and of every Individual in *Britain*, to do toward ſecuring the State from all its Enemies.

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The PUBLISHER to the READER.

THE great Demand for the former Impreſſions of this Pamphlet ſufficiently ſhews how acceptable it is to the Public. I beg leave therefore only to add, as a farther Proof of its Uſefulneſs, the Reverend Mr. BARKER's *Opinion of it, in his Sermon occaſioned by the Victory obtained over the Rebels at* CULLODEN, *in the Note,* p. 22. *where he ſays,*

" *See a Pamphlet called* BRITAIN's REMEMBRANCER, *which takes Notice of this and ſo many Things more relating to this Rebellion, and proper for the right Improvement of the preſent State of our Affairs, that I cannot but wiſh it in every Family; and that it might be very attentively read and conſidered. I know not the Author, but I take this Opportunity, publickly and heartily to thank him for his excellent Performance.*"

BRITAIN's REMEMBRANCER, &c.

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

THIS ADDRESS comes to your Hands at a Time when it is to be hoped you are a little come to yourſelves, and may be ſpoke to, if you will bear being ſpoke to at all. When public Calamities have been ſtriking Terror into a People, and the Dread of a general Ruin haſtening upon them has forced them on thinking, then ſeems to be a proper Seaſon for ſuggeſting to them Thoughts of a Kind too ſerious and important to be liſtned to in Times of Peace and Tranquillity, or in the giddy Hours of Mirth and Wantonneſs. To lay before you what I think the proper and neceſſary Conſiderations upon ſuch a Juncture as this, and endeavour as well as I can to direct you to that Improvement of it which may be worthy of a wiſe and great, as well as a pious and Chriſtian Nation, is the only Intention of this Application to you. And if there has been any Juncture within the Period of theſe laſt 30 Years, that might give any Hopes of gaining your Attention to wholeſome Advice, methinks this is it; and therefore I am

not without Hopes, that what I shall say on this Occasion will have some Effect upon you, and tend less or more to your Advantage. But, however it may succeed with regard to you, I am sure it will turn out no way to my own Disadvantage another Day, which is Encouragement enough to me to proceed in it.

If in any Part of this little Tract, the natural Warmth of my Imagination, my Zeal for the Cause I engage in, or an Excess of Concern for my Country, should give Occasion to my using any Expressions that may appear to one Sort of Readers too much exaggerated or heightned; I hope the unquestionable Sincerity of my Intention will plead my Excuse.

First, I think I may safely lay it down for a Truth capable of Demonstration, That if there is a God in Heaven, who by his Providence over-rules the Revolutions and disposes the Fates of Nations; according to his Pleasure raising one to Grandeur, and humbling another to the Dust; then it is plain from two of the necessary Attributes of his Nature, Wisdom and Goodness, that whatever Distresses he brings upon the Kingdoms of the Earth, he brings them for no other End than the Punishment of Guilt, and the moral Improvement of Mankind. It is plainly impossible, that any Evil can arise in the World against the Will of a Being of infinite Wisdom and Power; for by means of his Wisdom he must of necessity know whatever arises in the World, and by his Power must be able to prevent it, if he pleased; therefore there is no satisfactory Account to be given how Wars, Famine, Pestilence, and other Afflictions come upon Mankind, but by concluding, that they are permitted or sent by the Almighty for the Punishment of his disobedient Creatures, or for Warnings to call them to Repentance and Reformation.

There is indeed another Purpose for which one particular kind of Calamity has been permitted, I mean Persecution; and that is, for the Trial of the Faith and Constancy of pious Men. But when War, Famine, or Pestilence are sent upon a People, who have forgot God, and given themselves up to Folly and Wickedness, then it is plain they are intended as seasonable and rouzing Alarms, to call the Thoughtless to Repentance, and as Scourges to punish the daringly Impious. Since the Conclusion of the Prophetic and Apostolic Ages, the almighty Governour of the World has used no other Method for working out his important Ends of reforming or

puniſhing wicked Nations, than by threatning or actually inflicting upon them ſuch Judgments as will ſeverely diſtreſs them; the natural Effect of which is to put them upon flying to ſomething divine, for that Relief which they find nothing human will yield.

When the Almighty, of his great Mercy and Forbearance to a ſinful People, inſtead of bringing upon them the Puniſhment due to their Wickedneſs, does but threaten the Blow, without inflicting it; when he brings a Nation to the very Gates of Deſtruction, and by Means wholly out of human Power, delivers them in a ſignal and remarkable Manner; then does it highly concern that Nation wiſely to regard the Hand that has thus conſpicuouſly exerted itſelf for their Deliverance, and to conſider what important Leſſon is intended to be taught by ſuch a remarkable Interpoſition; leſt, if they ſlight theſe Warnings too often, the Patience and Forbearance of the beſt of Beings be at laſt provoked againſt them, ſo that he determine again to bring them into Danger and Fear as formerly, but not as formerly to deliver them.

You have, my dear Countrymen, in one Seaſon been threatned with two heavy National Calamities, *viz.* a Dearth of Corn, and a bloody inteſtine War. As to the firſt, every one remembers that the Fall of Rains laſt Summer was ſo ſevere, and of ſo long Continuance, that the whole Harveſt of the Year was generally given over for loſt; and it is certain, that a very few Weeks more Rain had entirely cut it off. But that Mercy, which we have never deſerved, interpoſed in the Time of our Diſtreſs. The Almighty ſhewed us how entirely we were in his Power; what we might expect, if we did not take timely Warning; and at the ſame Time how loth he is to treat Mankind as they deſerve. We let this Threatning go as it came, without ſhewing any Regard to it. And yet he forgave us and ſpared us. He ſcattered his Clouds by the Breath of his Winds; he commanded his Sun to ſhine and his Heavens again to ſmile upon us; the Earth yielded her Fruits, the Poor rejoiced in the Proſpect of Plenty, and he crowned the Year with his Goodneſs.

You have likewiſe very lately ſeen the Sword let looſe amongſt you, and have been put in Fear of its coming home to each of your own Boſoms. You have ſeen the daring Emiſſary of a Popiſh Pretender preſume to invade your peaceful Iſland, unuſed to Scenes of Violence and Blood, and

with

with a Crew of lawleſs Rebels threaten Ruin and Deſtruction to your civil and religious Liberties, and Slavery, Perſecution and Death with Tortures, to every one of you, who ſhould refuſe to make Shipwreck of a good Conſcience. You ſaw this Rebel-Rout over-run and conquer a very conſiderable Part of your Country, a great and populous City, and a Body of your regular Forces. All this you ſaw with Terror and Amazement. Confuſion filled every Heart, and Paleneſs covered every Face. You looked when this bloody Crew with haſty Marches ſhould arrive at your Metropolis, and lay the Glory of the greateſt City in the World in Duſt. You dreaded every Day the Arrival of a *French* Army on your Coaſts, well knowing that it was under the Umbrage of that reſtleſs and ambitious Nation, the Rival of your Greatneſs, and the old Diſturber of your Peace, that the curſed Scheme was framed. You ſaw yourſelves wholly deſtitute of Forces to defend you againſt the Enemy already in your Country, and much more againſt the united Force of the rebellious Crew, and an Army from *France* to ſecond them. Then did *French* Tyranny, Popery, and Perſecution preſent themſelves to your Eyes. Then did you view your Country as already filled with Blood, with Fire and Deſolation, a general Maſſacre begun, and the *Britiſh* Empire deſtined for a Province to *France*. And had they not been infatuated by Heaven to conſume ſo long a Time in the North, inſtead of hurrying on toward *London*, immediately after the Defeat of the Army, what Numbers from every County in *England* would have flocked in to them, fluſhed as they were with their firſt Succeſs, who can pretend to ſay? And had we not all the Reaſon in the World to fear, that their Friends in *London* would have immediately fired the City? And what could then have been the Event of the infernal Machination, but your Country's being plunged in a Sea of Blood, if not wholly overflowed and loſt in it? Theſe were the Terrors of that gloomy Day, and theſe your Fears were but too well grounded. It was in that melancholy Criſis, when all look'd black and threatening around you, and when no Help ſeemed to be near, that He, whoſe timely Interpoſition has ſo often ſaved this unthankful Nation in her laſt Extremity, caſt an Eye of Pity on your Diſtreſs, and reſolved to deliver you once more from your Enemies, to prove you, whether you would leave off your Follies, caſt your Sins behind your Backs, and

turn

turn to him with your whole Hearts, or if you would forget your almighty and merciful Deliverer, and return to the Purſuit of your Follies and Vices as before. He commanded his Winds to waft over your Forces from abroad. He commanded an Eaſt-Wind to blow for a whole Month together, at a Seaſon of the Year in which they are very rarely known. Your Army landed, after one of the quickeſt Paſſages ever heard of, juſt in Time to ſupport and revive your Spirits after your ſudden Conſternation, and to reſtore to you that Courage which was abſolutely neceſſary to enable you to take any farther Meaſures for your own Safety.

Let any Perſon of Judgment in the Nation ſay what muſt have been the Conſequence, if a weſterly Wind had ſet in for a very few Weeks, about the Time when our Forces were ſo much wanted from abroad, which would have been only agreeable to the uſual Courſe of the Seaſon; or what would have been the Conſequence, had a Body of 10 or 12,000 Men from *France* arrived among us, at the Time when an Army of Cut-throats were already broke looſe in our Country; or what would have been the Conſequence, had the rebellious Crew, immediately after the Defeat of our Army, haſtned into the midſt of *England*, and hurrying on to *London* itſelf, taken us under every Diſadvantage; which was the Part they ought, according to Prudence, to have acted, and were expected to act, according to their own declared Intention. The Thoughtleſs, who do not take the Trouble of obſerving the Ways of Heaven, and the Impious, who have forgot the God who made and governs the World, may overlook theſe remarkable Concurrences of Circumſtances, or conſider them as no other than common Accidents falling out according to the natural Courſe of Things: But the Wiſe and Conſiderate, I am perſuaded, will own, that it is not our own Arm that hath ſaved us; and that this Deliverance, ſo far as we are yet delivered, is from God.

And now, my dear Countrymen, muſt I ask you whether you think ſuch ſignal Interpoſitions in your Favour require any particular Regard on your Part, or whether you can perſuade yourſelves that they have no Meaning at all, and are no way intended to put you upon thinking or altering your Conduct? Methinks the very Suppoſition, that a wiſe and a Chriſtian Nation ſhould be capable of overlooking ſuch remarkable Providences, and of neglecting to make the due Improvement of them, ought to appear an Affront to your

Character.

Character. But, alas! the Days of Thought, Attention, and religious Regard to the awful Steps of Providence, are gone, and giddy Pleasure and atheistical Ignorance have taken their Place. If there are however any left among us, who have not resolved to harden their Hearts against all Thought and Reflection, to them I willingly write, and do not grudge the Trouble of laying before them the following brief View of the characteristic Vices of the Age, which we are so loudly called upon by these awful Threatnings of Heaven to reform without Delay. And if any, from a sincere Desire of their own Amendment and that of others, of appeasing the Wrath of Heaven, and preventing a much more fatal Visitation, would know what are the peculiar Vices which distinguish this unhappy Age from all the past, and against which the late Vengeance of Heaven was particularly threatened; I wish the Answer were not so ready as it is, and that it were not so obvious to every Eye, that LUXURY and IRRELIGION, which are inseparable Companions, are the characteristic Vices of the Age, and that our degenerate Times and corrupt Nation have the Unhappiness of being singular in this Respect; that, whereas in all the other Kingdoms of the World, and all the Ages of it, it has ever been only the Rich and Great who have either had Taste enough to pretend to consume their Lives and Incomes in Luxury and Pleasure, or Insolence enough to presume to treat all Things serious and sacred with Contempt: On the contrary, with us no Rank or Station is too low for either of these polite Vices; for at this Day hardly any Man thinks himself so mean as not to be above Religion, Frugality and Sobriety. But when I say these two are the distinguishing Vices of the Age, I am far enough from meaning that they are the only ones. No; tho' they alone are more than sufficient to sink a Nation, yet we want not for a numerous Train of others that always follow at their Heels. For when Luxury and Irreligion enter a Nation, with them enter Venality, Perjury, Faction, Opposition to legal Authority, Idleness, Gluttony, Drunkenness, Leudness, excessive Gaming, Robberies, clandestine Marriages, Breach of Matrimonial Vows, Self-murders, and innumerable others. Here is a Legion of Furies sufficient to rend any State or Empire that ever was in the World to pieces; and accordingly we find, from universal History, that no Degree of Wealth, of Trade, of Naval or Military Force, have ever been sufficient to support any Nation where Luxury and Vice have

pre-

prevailed, but on the contrary the greateſt Empires in all Ages have ſunk before them.

I hope it will not be to your Diſadvantage to obſerve, from the few following Inſtances the Truth of this Aſſertion, which may ſhew you what you are to expect, and what will be the Iſſue of your Conduct, if you do not alter it in Time.

The firſt great Empire in the World, *viz.* the *Aſſyrian*, the Capital of which was *Nineveh*, owed its Deſtruction entirely to the Luxury of its Prince *Sardanapalus*, of whom *Diodorus*, *Juſtin*, &c. give the following Account, That he ſurpaſſed all his Predeceſſors in Effeminacy, Luxury, and Cowardice. That he never went out of his Palace, but ſpent all his Time among a Company of Women, dreſſed, and painted like them, and employed like them at the Diſtaff. That he placed all his Glory in the Poſſeſſion of immenſe Treaſures, in Feaſting, Rioting, and indulging himſelf in all the moſt infamous and criminal Pleaſures. Which Luxury ſome of his own Generals growing impatient of, and deſpiſing to be governed by him, took Arms againſt him, entirely overturned the Empire, and broke it into three Kingdoms. Such was the Effect of Luxury and Vice in one Perſon. What may they not then produce, when they become ſo univerſal as to debauch a whole Nation?

The *Babylonian* Empire, ſo called from the City *Babylon* its Capital, aroſe after the Fall of that properly called the *Aſſyrian*. It grew to great Splendor and Riches, and thoſe Riches produced great Luxury, which proved the Ruin of the State. For the City and Empire were taken by *Darius* the *Median*, in the Night by Surprize, while the King *Belſhazzar*, his Wives and his Concubines, with a Thouſand of the Nobles of the Land, were engaged in a Debauch*. So little did this luxurious Monarch and his Court profit by the Example of the Ruin which Luxury and Vice had before brought upon the *Aſſyrian* Empire.

The *Perſian* Empire, which aroſe on the Ruins of the *Babylonian*, acquiring immenſe Riches by that Conqueſt, fell alſo into great Luxury, and in Time exceeded the *Babylonian* in that very Vice, which they ſaw bring on its Deſtruction. For in *Xerxes*'s Time, when he invaded *Greece* with an Army of above two Millions and a half, the Number of the Ser-

* See *Dan.* V.

vänts and Attendants exceeded that of the Soldiers: But that of the Concubines, Eunuchs, and other Implements of Luxury which accompanied his Army, according to *Herodotus*, was beyond Reckoning. And the Event was anſwerable. for almoſt this whole Multitude was deſtroyed. The Luxury of this Army was ſo great, that in *Mardonius*'s Camp, (who was left by *Xerxes* to finiſh the War, which he himſelf thought proper to deſert with great Precipitation) there were found ſuch prodigious Sums in Gold and Silver, beſides Cups, Veſſels, Beds, Tables, Necklaces, and Bracelets of Gold and Silver, not to be valued, that *Juſtin* gives it as his Judgment, That theſe very Spoils proved fatal to all *Greece*, by becoming the Inſtruments of introducing Luxury among her Inhabitants. And when afterwards the Empire was attacked by *Alexander*, its whole Power fell before him at the Head of a Handful (for ſuch they were, compared to the Army of *Darius*) of Troops not enervated by Luxury, in which *Darius* indulged himſelf to ſuch a Degree, as could not fail to ruin his Expedition; the very Army being incumbered with ſuch a numerous Train of Princeſſes, Concubines, Eunuchs, and Domeſtics of both Sexes, that their Proceſſion in Chariots, with all manner of Magnificence, made his Expedition appear more like a Triumph or a Pageant, than the March of an Army to Battle. It is obſerved by *Seneca*, that the *Perſians* carried their Luxury and Extravagance in the Army, with reſpect to their Tents, Chariots, and good Cheer, to a greater Exceſs, if poſſible, than they did in their Cities. The fineſt Meats, the rareſt Birds, and the moſt exquiſite Dainties, muſt be found for the Prince, in what Part ſoever of the World he was encamped. They had their Veſſels of Gold and Silver without Number; "Inſtruments of *Luxury*, ſays *Q. Curtius*, not of *Victory*, and "more proper to allure and enrich an Enemy, than to repel "or defeat them."

One would have thought that *Alexander*, who himſelf overpower'd the vaſt Army of *Perſia* by the mere Advantage of his Troops being hardned to War, whereas thoſe of *Darius* were effeminated by Luxury to ſuch a Degree, that thirty Thouſand *Macedonians* proved victorious over ſix Hundred Thouſand *Perſians*; one would have thought, I ſay, that *Alexander* himſelf would have been in no Danger, with ſuch an Example before his Eyes, of ſplitting upon the ſame Rock that had proved ſo fatal to *Darius*. But we are told by *Juſtin*,

ſtin, " That he degenerated into the Luxury and Vices of " the *Perſians*, whom by means of that very Luxury he had " overcome. That he ſuffered his Army to debauch them- " ſelves in the ſame manner. That afterwards he gave himſelf " up to the moſt unkingly Cruelty againſt his own Friends, one " of whom he murdered for expreſſing himſelf a little freely " concerning his Faults. That he then proceeded to demand " divine Honours to be paid to him, which ſome of his Mi- " niſters bravely refuſing, he baſely cauſed them to be mur- " dered." At length, degenerating into immoderate Intemperance and Drunkenneſs, he died ſuddenly in the midſt of a Debauch. Whether he was poiſoned by ſome of his Nobles, whom he had provoked by his Cruelties, as ſome Writers affirm, or whether his Death was the Effect of Drunkenneſs, as others aſſert, comes to the ſame Purpoſe, to wit, that he fell a Sacrifice to his own Luxury and Vices. With him fell the Empire he had raiſed, being immediately divided into ſeveral Kingdoms, which his Favourites ſhared amongſt them.

Thus have we ſeen the three firſt univerſal Monarchies, *viz.* the *Aſſyrian* or *Babylonian*, the *Perſian*, and the *Grecian*, ſuffer ſeveral terrible Shocks, and at laſt ſink under Luxury and Vice. Let us now ſee what Effects they had upon the fourth, *viz.* the *Roman*.

It is remarkable, that after *Lucullus* debauched the *Romans* with the Luxury of *Aſia*, they did not preſerve their Liberties for half a Century; the perpetual Dictatorſhip being within that Time uſurped by *Julius Cæſar*, which provoked *Brutus*, and thoſe who ſtood with him for Freedom, to cut him off. The Commonwealth was immediately upon this involved in a bloody Civil War, in which ſome of the greateſt Men of *Rome* fell. From theſe Times, the ancient ſimple *Roman* Virtue gradually ſunk more and more, till the Empire at laſt was tore to pieces by the Irruption of the Northern Nations.

We are told by *Salluſt*, That the principal Tools which *Catiline* (after the Expedition of *Lucullus*) made uſe of for carrying his Conſpiracy into Execution, were ſuch of the Men of Birth in *Rome* as had by their Luxury and Extravagance conſumed their Eſtates, (and who conſequently were willing to engage in any Deſign from which they had a Chance of repairing them by Plunder) and thoſe of the Army, whom *Sylla* in his Wars in *Aſia* had debauched with Luxury and

Pleasure, in order to engage them the more strongly to his Party. From this Conspiracy, the greatest Empire in the World was in the most imminent Danger of a total Subversion, and must have fallen before it, but for the unequalled Sagacity and Vigilance of *Cicero*, who was then Consul, and who, for his successful Care of the State, received the honourable Title of, *The Father of his Country*.

To add no other particular Instances, which would be endless; how the *Roman* Empire sunk from one Degree to another of Luxury, Venality, and Effeminacy, till at length it was divided into ten Kingdoms, by the *Goths* and *Vandals*, is very well known to all that are in the least acquainted with the *Roman* History, and that its Ruin was owing to its Vices, and to its Vices only, which enervated its ancient Strength, and gave it a Prey to its Enemies.

Your Patience would fail me before I could give an Account of one half of the fatal Effects of Luxury and Vice upon the other States, Empires, and Cities of the World. Yet I cannot avoid mentioning the Destruction of the luxurious City of *Tarentum*, the Manners of that People having very much resembled our own at this Day. We are told by *Strabo*, *Plutarch*, &c. that there were more Festivals, solemn Games, and publick Feasts in this City than Days in the Year. That, upon an outrageous Insult offered by them to the *Romans*, being drawn into a War with them, their Pride and Wantonness were so great, that they neither knew how to conduct it, nor to avoid it by a prudent Peace. That having called in King *Pyrrhus* to manage it for them, the whole People soon began to exclaim against him, (much in the same licentious Manner as the good People of *England* are wont to shew their Wit and their Ignorance, by railing against their Governors) because he found it necessary, in order to qualify them for War, to establish an exact military Discipline among them. Some even quitted the City, thinking it a Condition of insupportable Slavery not to be permitted to live the same idle and voluptuous Life, while they were engaged in War with a powerful Enemy, as they used to indulge themselves in, in Times of Peace and Prosperity. The War ended accordingly in the total Overthrow of that powerful City, once so famous for its Wealth, Trade, and Magnificence.

The Character of the *Sybarites*, and the Ruin of their City and State, are likewise so peculiarly proper to my Purpose, that

that I cannot help abridging their Story. This City became so very powerful, as to be able to raise an Army of three hundred thousand Men. Their Wealth soon introduced Luxury, and such a Dissolution of Manners as is almost incredible, if it were not attested by *Strabo*, and other authentic Writers. The Citizens employed themselves in nothing but Banquets, Games, Shows, Parties of Pleasure and Carousals. Public Rewards were bestowed on those who gave the most magnificent Entertainments; and even to such ingenious Cooks as were best skilled in the important Art of making Improvements in the dressing of nice Dishes, and inventing new Refinements to tickle the Palate. They carried their Delicacy to the monstrous Length of sending out of the City all manner of noisy Artificers, as Blacksmiths, Carpenters, *&c.* and destroying all the Cocks, that their downy Slumbers might not be disturbed by any Noise.

This unbounded Luxury naturally produced Dissentions, which proved their Ruin; one of the contending Parties having Interest enough to engage the *Crotonians* to come against the City with an Army, which tho' only equal to a third Part of that which the *Sybarites* brought into the Field, yet not being enervated by Luxury, as that of the *Sybarites* was, proved victorious over them, and totally overthrew their City and State.

Why shall I weary you with a long Account of the ancient State and Destruction of the great City of *Corinth?* A City once so eminent for its fine Harbours, its extensive Trade, and its Wealth, as to draw upon it the Envy of *Rome* herself. This Wealth puffed them up so with Insolence, that they cast the most provoking Indignities they could think of upon the *Roman* Embassadors In Revenge for which the *Romans* sent *L. Mummius* against them, who burnt their City and razed it to the Ground.

Why should I enlarge on the Fall of the great City of *Constantinople*, which at its Destruction was got to a prodigious Height of Splendor and Riches, which the Inhabitants refused to part with for their own Security. The *Turks* were so enriched with its Plunder, that it became a Proverb, if any Man acquired great Wealth on a sudden, "that he had been "at the Sack of *Constantinople**."

* *Eachard's* Rom. Hist. vol. 5, p. 456.

Or

Or why ſhould I mention the Conqueſt of *Syria* by the *Mahometan Saracens*, the Inhabitants of which were grown ſo wicked, from the great Riches and Eaſe they enjoyed, that they themſelves imputed their Miſeries to the juſt Judgments of God for their prodigious Luxury*.

Theſe are ſome of the Ravages, which the infernal Monſter LUXURY and its attendant Vices have been making upon the Nations of the Earth for almoſt theſe three thouſand Years backwards. The mightieſt Empires, the richeſt Kingdoms, and the beſt fortified Cities have fallen before them. And what can *Britain* then expect, but to ſhare their Fate, if ſhe do not take Warning by their Fall?

And now, for the LUXURY of our own Times, ſhould any one deſire to have it prov'd to him, that we are in the preſent Age arrived to an Exceſs in that Vice beyond all the paſt, from which the greateſt Danger may be feared to the State, both on Account of the natural Conſequences of that Vice itſelf, and the others, which are its conſtant Attendants, and likewiſe of its judicial Conſequences, or the Vengeance it is likely to bring upon us from the Hand of Heaven; I ſay, ſhould any one deſire to have a Demonſtration of the exceſſive Luxury of our Times, it might ſeem ſufficient only to deſire him to take a ſuperficial Survey of the Manner of Life of almoſt every Rank in the Nation, but eſpecially the very loweſt, and he will hardly ſee any thing elſe but Luxury, Pleaſure, and Extravagance ſtaring him in the Face, wherever he turns his Eyes in Town and Country.

As to the Conduct of the higheſt Ranks in the Nation in this Reſpect, to ſay the Truth, it is leſs to be blamed than that of their Inferiors. It were to be wiſhed indeed, that they would live moſtly upon their own Eſtates, and within their Incomes, and that they would make the beſt of their Eſtates by keeping their Accounts and tranſacting their Buſineſs themſelves, without the Intervention of a Pack of raſcally Stewards and Rent-gatherers, whoſe Practice it is too commonly to plunder the Landlord with one Hand, and the Tenant with the other.

Again, if any one deſires to enquire into the Character of the trading Part of the Nation as to Luxury, let him take a View of the Manner of Life in all the conſiderable Cities in *Britain*, but eſpecially in this once great and flouriſhing Me-

* *Oakley*'s Hiſt. of the *Saracens*, p. 27, and 222.

tropolis.

tropolis. Whoever does so, will see little else than Scenes of Wantonness, Pleasure, and Extravagance. In these Streets, which in the last Age were filled with decent Citizens dressed in a Garb, plain, uniform, and fit for Business, he will now see a motley Race of *English* Traders burlesqued into *French* Dancing-Masters; their Cloaths bepatched with Lace, their Hands unfitted for Business by being muffled up in Cambrick to the Fingers Ends, and their Feet crippled by Wooden-heeled Shoes of some Inches high. That these *French* Fopperies should thus fill the Heads and disguise the Persons of our Citizens, seems no hopeful Omen for the Trade of *England*. If he goes into the Houses of the Citizens (and not of the richest neither) the Luxury, the Expence, the Number of Servants, and the Entertainment of a Palace will meet his Eyes. If he visits a Tradesman of the meanest Rank, he will see nothing less than gilt China-ware, Silver-Plate, and Choice of foreign Wines adorn his Board*.

Where are now the sober and regular Manners of our Fathers, when it was the constant Custom for the Citizens to rise betimes according to the Order of Nature, and employ the Morning in examining their Accounts, adjusting their Warehouses and Shops, and preparing themselves for the busy Hours of the Day? When the Exchange was shut at Twelve, and Dinner over every where by One; when they spent their Evenings at home in instructing their Children, Apprentices, and Servants, in the Principles of Virtue and Religion, and concluded every Day with the laudable Exercise of Family-devotion? In place of these decent and regular Methods of living, our Citizens now find it hard to rise by Ten, to get dress'd for the Change by Two, to get Dinner and the Bottle after it over by Four; and in an Hour after, the joking Club, the wanton Play-house in Winter, and the luxurious Musick-Garden in Summer, call them from the peaceful Enjoyment of their Families at home, from the Instruction of their

* The modern Extravagance in Dress has also given rise to the enormous Expence of Coaches, which are now found absolutely necessary for saving our fine Cloaths, but might be wholly spared, would People content themselves with Apparel fit for Use. Wonderful! that only in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Time there was not a Coach in *England*, and that in a Course of about 150 Years the Number of them should be beyond Reckoning.

Children

Children and Domeſticks, and from the Worſhip of Him in whoſe Power alone it is to ſend a Bleſſing upon their ſecular Employments. Nor do they think the Midnight-hour too late to conclude their Pleaſures, or to ſeek that Reſt which Nature, wearied with a Round of Follies, requires. Thus does Luxury invert the beautiful Ordination of Heaven, which appointed the Day for Labour, and the Night for Reſt.

And is it then any Wonder that the riſing Generation have no more Senſe or Underſtanding of Chriſtianity than if they had never heard of it, and that the *London* Apprentices are, generally ſpeaking, a Sett of mere Town-Rakes? Is it any Wonder, that the Affairs of Families are neglected, when the Maſters of them are gone abroad in Purſuit of Pleaſure one Way, and their Wives another? Or is it to be expected, that an extravagant Apprentice or Journeyman, who has not had one Principle of Honeſty or Religion infuſed into his Mind by Education, will not lay hold on ſuch Opportunities for plundering his Maſter for the Gratification of his own Luſts and Appetites? If People will not take care of their own Houſes themſelves, how can they expect others ſhould do it for them? Indeed I cannot conceive how they can reliſh any Mirth or Pleaſure abroad, while their Houſes at home are liable to be ſtript or fired by the Careleſneſs or Diſhoneſty of Servants. And if the Scenes of Pleaſure and Gaiety, which they paſs through abroad, are at all reliſhed by them, the Effect they muſt have on their Minds muſt be, only to make their Buſineſs a Drudgery, and their own Homes dull and tireſome.

The modern Luxury and Extravagance of the Citizens appears from nothing more convincingly than its viſible Effects, I mean the frequent Bankruptcies of late, which have brought Things at length to that Paſs, that now it is hardly thought prejudicial to the Credit of a Trader that he make a Stop of Payments, if he eſcapes being fairly declared a Bankrupt. And indeed how can Bankruptcy miſs to be the Conſequence, when our young Traders now-a-days uſually begin where formerly the old ones ended, I mean, with furniſhing a Town-houſe and a Country-houſe, ſetting up Coaches, or keeping Horſes, making as great a Shew as poſſible of Wealth and Trade, and taking as much Credit as they can have by any Means, without making any Allowances for the innumerable Chances

of

of Trade, and Dangers of being disappointed of Returns to enable them to make due Payments.

How many Instances have we of the terrible Consequences of Extravagance among Traders; some of whom have been forced by their Necessities upon the fatal and wretched Shift of endeavouring to patch up their Credit by Gaming; which only sinks them so much the deeper. Others we have seen betake themselves to the Highway, and in endeavouring to recover their ruined Fortunes, make Shipwreck of Life, Fortune and Soul at once.

But what above all gives the most dismal Prospect of the State of the Nation is the monstrous, and hitherto unequalled Luxury which prevails among the very lowest Ranks of the People. It is very well known, that now even the poor Mechanick, by whose Labour the Trade of our Country ought to be supported, has learned to spend every *Sunday*, and at least the two following Days of the Week in Drunkenness and Idleness, and to lay out generally the whole Earnings of the foregoing Week in procuring to himself a Taste of those heighten'd Pleasures, which even in the luxurious Age of King *Charles* II. were thought only fit for People of Fortune to run mad after; I mean, getting drunk, haunting of Bawdy-houses, seeing Plays, hearing Musick, *&c.* So that in our Days every Journeyman has as high a Relish of Pleasure, and as fine a Taste, as they affect to call it, of Plays and Musick, as most of the Gentry of the above-mentioned infamous Age. And is it then any Wonder that we cannot carry our Manufactures to foreign Markets on equal Terms with the Rivals of our Trade; with the additional Charge of foreign Wines, Musicians and Players to be added to their Price?

To give a full View of the Luxury of the Age, my dear Countrymen, would carry me a great Way beyond the intended Length of this Pamphlet and of your Patience. To have just Notions of the State of this epidemic Vice let any Man open his Eyes, and every Object will present it to his View. For in every Street of this great Metropolis he will see one Tavern or House of Entertainment within Call of another*; whereas it is known, that only in the Days of the Fathers of

* I am credibly informed, that by an Account taken of the publick Houses of different Kinds in only one Parish in *London*, they were found to be no less than fifteen hundred. What must then be the whole Number within the Bills of Mortality?

People now alive, ſtrong Liquors were ſold no where but at the Shops of Apothecaries. In the Dreſs of the Inhabitants he will ſee Journeymen and Chambermaids got beyond the Pitch of the Quality of laſt Age. In every Village round the City he will ſee every Sixth Houſe poſſeſſed by a Retailer of ſtrong Liquors, and prepared for the Reception of the rambling Inhabitants, of which he will ſee ſuch Numbers carouſing in each of them every *Sunday*, when the Weather is fair, as would make a Stranger conclude there was a general Carnival in the Nation, and that all the Inhabitants were broke looſe. In every delightful Spot around the City he will ſee a Retreat ſet apart for Muſick, Wine, and Wantonneſs, and there he will ſee ſuch Magnificence, Taſte, and Expence as is beyond the Power of moſt Princes in *Europe* to ſupport; and all for the Entertainment of the Inhabitants of a City which was once the Seat of Frugality, Trade, Induſtry, Sobriety, Religion, and every Virtue that could make a Nation great and happy. If he looks into the publick News-Papers, he will ſee them filled with Advertiſements of Races, Cock-Matches, Plays, Muſick-Gardens, Balls, Aſſemblies, Operas, Concerts, Maſquerades, Breakfaſting-houſes, Ridottos and Fire-works. And to ſhew how our Pleaſures have ingroſſed us, and into what a Lethargy they have ſunk us, in the very Papers, which lately gave Accounts from time to time of the Progreſs of the Rebels, whoſe Arrival at our Metropolis we dreaded every Day, and from which a general Maſſacre was reaſonably to be expected; in the very ſame Paper, I ſay, one Paragraph contained the Hiſtory of their Motions, and the very next invited us to a Play or a Horſe-Race. And, if he ſteps into the Theatre, it will be hard for him to ſay whether Luxury or Wickedneſs prevails there moſt; but (to poſtpone the Wickedneſs of the Theatre till afterwards) ſurely the Magnificence of the Decorations, the Dreſſes of the Players, the Finery of the Audience, and the Indolence of their Appearance, as they ſit diſſolved in Pleaſure and Gaiety, would incline a Being who did not know the State of Human Nature, and who had been tranſported thither from another World, to conclude, that Mankind were an Order of Creatures placed here on Earth merely to enjoy themſelves for a Courſe of Years, without being obliged to any Manner of Duty, or that their whole Duty were to invent the moſt exquiſite Gratifications for their Senſes, and indulge them-

themſelves in the moſt exquiſite Pleaſures that could be found out.

We may think of this Matter as we pleaſe, but it will be found hereafter, that no Son or Daughter of *Adam* has any Indulgence from Heaven to a live Life of abſolute Indolence and Pleaſure, without filling up a certain Station and doing the Duties of a certain Sphere. Were we even an Order of Beings abſolutely innocent and blameleſs, it is not to be conceived, that the almighty Governor of the World would ſee us with Satisfaction conſume our Time in a manner altogether uſeleſs to ourſelves or our Fellow Creatures, tho' the Enjoyments we amuſed ourſelves with were otherwiſe harmleſs: But for an offending, guilty Order of Creatures, who are continually provoking the Diſpleaſure of our Maker, and in continual Danger of bringing down his Vengeance upon our Heads, to paſs away the Time of Trial for an everlaſting State in Pleaſure, and in criminal Pleaſure too, while we ought to be endeavouring by Penitence for our Faults to avert the Puniſhment due to us, and by a conſtant Watch over our Conduct to qualify ourſelves for being fit Objects of heavenly Mercy; I ſay, for ſuch an Order of Creatures as we are, to live the Life we do, what is it but for a Sett of Criminals to revel in Priſon with Wine and Muſick, and to inſult their Judge to his Face?

From this curſed Fountain, among many other poiſonous Streams, flows that fatal one of the unhappy Diviſions of our Country. While ſo many among the Great by their Extravagance run out their Fortunes, it is no wonder that ſo many want to fiſh in troubled Waters, and can find in their Hearts to divide a Nation for the ſake of gaining their own private Purpoſes. And when Men of inferior Ranks find their Affairs going into Diſorder, they readily become proper Dupes to the Heads of Factions, and are then fit to join in the Clamour againſt their Governors. Were People at Eaſe in their own private Fortunes, they could not ſo ſoon be put in a Paſſion at the Proceedings of the Government. What gives me the moſt Diſguſt in this Matter is, that thoſe ſimple People, who are ſo good-natured as to let out their Paſſions for nothing to the Heads of Parties, are commonly the moſt ignorant both of the Hiſtory of other Countries and the preſent State and true Intereſt of their own, are commonly the fartheſt from the Springs of Government, and conſequently know leaſt what Difficulties a Government have to ſtruggle

with, and in what peculiar Circumſtances they are involved. Thus they who are leaſt qualified for finding Fault are, generally ſpeaking, loudeſt in their Complaints. That ever Men ſhould pretend to ſettle the Affairs of Nations, while their own exorbitant Deſires and Appetites are in an Uproar within them, or to find Fault with thoſe who have the Government of Kingdoms in their Hands, while themſelves cannot govern their own Paſſions!

Nor is it to be imputed to any other Cauſe than unbounded Luxury, that the People of *Great Britain*, formerly a Nation of Heroes, are now ſo enervated and effeminate, that if they happen to be deſtitute of an Army trained to War and Hardſhip, they are before an Enemy as a Flock of Sheep before Wolves; as appears from what we have ſeen but the other Day, *viz.* a Banditti of hardy Ruffians penetrating into the Heart of our Country without Interruption or Oppoſition from the People, and likely to reach our Metropolis itſelf, had they not been prevented by the Army.

Thus have I laid before you, my dear Countrymen, a very brief View of a very copious Subject, *viz.* the modern LUXURY of our unhappy Country. The other epidemic Diſeaſe I mentioned from whence the moſt fatal Effects are to be feared, and which is inſeparable from the former, is IRRELIGION. And here I am got, if poſſible, into a larger Field than before, and into a Subject, which yields a more gloomy Proſpect than the former. If the unbounded Luxury of the Age has the falſe Plea of great Wealth and Trade to ſupport it (tho' it is certain no Degree of Wealth or Trade are ſufficient for it;) if it ſhould pretend, tho' falſly, that its natural Conſequences are more to be feared than its judicial: If Luxury, I ſay, ſhould pretend to theſe wretched and ſophiſtical Defences, Irreligion cannot; for it is more inexcuſable in this Age, (an Age of the greateſt Light and Knowledge that has been for above theſe twelve hundred Years backwards) than in all the paſt; and it is likewiſe a more certain Means of bringing Deſtruction upon a Nation, than even Luxury itſelf. For, if there be a God in Heaven, it is not to be imagined he will long ſuffer a Nation to flouriſh, which ſhews the utmoſt Contempt for the beſt and moſt ſublime Diſpenſation of Religion that can be laid before the Sons of Men. That the People of *England* are at this Day guilty of this atrocious and provoking Crime, needs no other Proof than what will appear to any one, who will but caſt the moſt careleſs Eye upon

the Ways of all Ranks in the Nation, the Clergy themſelves not excepted, to our inexpreſſible Confuſion and their indelible Diſgrace be it ſpoken.

The Irreligion of the preſent Age is above the ſneaking out of Sight or concealing itſelf. It appears without bluſhing in our News-Papers, walks in State at our Declarations of War, preſides at our Elections, and reigns without Controul at our public Diverſions.

The following and ſuch like Bravadoes meet our Eyes almoſt in every News-Paper. "The Fleets are in high Spirits, "and only long for a hearty Bruſh with the Dons. We only "deſire the Arm of the Fleſh may be left to decide the Quar- "rel. We doubt not but the brave Admiral ſuch-a-one with "his glorious Fleet will ſoon give a good Account of the "Enemy. Let *England* but take Care of her Fleet, and "what has ſhe to fear?"

In all which there is ſo far from any Appearance of a Senſe of Dependence upon Heaven, that we ſeem rather deſirous to ſtand by our own Strength than be beholden to the Aſſiſtance of the God of Battles. I ſhall only at preſent add on this Particular, that had ſuch Expreſſions as the above and many others of the ſame Kind, that have paſſed unpuniſhed in the public News-Papers ſince the Commencement of the *Spaniſh* War, been publiſhed at *Athens* or *Rome*, the Publiſhers had been treated as Contemners of the Gods of their Country*.

And,

* To quote all the Paſſages from Heathen Writers, in which they ſpeak of the Reverence due by States and Empires to the ſuperior Powers, and of the abſolute Dependence on them, which they ought to expreſs in all their public Undertakings, would fill a Volume I ſhall therefore only refer the Reader to the Writings of the looſe and wanton *Horace* himſelf for ſome Expreſſions which diſcover a Senſe of Reverence and Submiſſion to the Gods, that may put the Chriſtians of our degenerate Age and Nation out of Countenance. See *Book* I. *Ode* 2. where (*verſe* 35) he intreats ſeveral of the inferior Deities to intercede with *Jupiter*, that he would not deſtroy the *Roman* Empire for the Murder of *Julius Cæſar*. Ode 12. *ver.* 14. He ſays *Jupiter* has the ſupreme Diſpoſal of the Affairs of Gods and Men. See alſo *verſe* 49. *Ode* 34. is an Acknowledgement of the abſolute Power of *Jupiter* to over-rule all human Affairs. *Book* III. *Ode* 1. *verſe* 6. he calls *Jupiter* ſupreme King over all earthly Monarchs, and ſays all Things depend upon his Nod. He ſpeaks to

And, now I mention the *Spaniſh* War, I appeal to the Thouſands, who ſaw it declared, whether there appeared in the Behaviour and Converſation of the People of *London* on that Occaſion the leaſt Senſe of Humanity for their Fellow-Creatures, who were likely to ſuffer in it, or the leaſt Dependence on Heaven for the Succeſs of it; or whether the Spirit, which reigned at that Time in *England* was not a Spirit of Inſolence and Defiance both of God and Man? It is plain from the *Roman* Hiſtory, that that humane People (though Strangers to our Religion, which teaches us that the whole Succeſs of War depends upon the over-ruling Providence of God) always engaged in it with a deeper Senſe of Dependence upon their Gods, who yet were Idols and no Gods, than we ſhew on Him, *who does in the Armies of Heaven and among the Inhabitants of the Earth whatever pleaſes him, and whoſe Hand none can ſtay* *.

Further, it is owing wholly to the Luxury and Senſuality of the Age, that a Religion, which has upon it all the Characters, a Revelation from God can be imagined to have, is rejected and deſpiſed in this unhappy Nation.

What avails it, that the important Truths of Chriſtianity have of late been ſo deeply enquired into, that they have been oppoſed by the moſt ſubtle Writers of the Deiſtical Party, and defended by the greateſt Maſters of Human Reaſon, and that the Reſult of all this Enquiry is, that theſe ſacred Truths have by that means been better eſtabliſhed to the Satisfaction of every fair Examiner than if they had never been controverted; what avails, I ſay, all this ſtrict and ſevere

the ſame Purpoſe, *Ode* 4. *verſe* 45. See alſo *verſe* 66. *Ode* 6. of the ſame Book is written expreſly to charge the *Romans* with the Contempt of Religion and Depravation of Manners, and to aſſure them, that from thence proceeded the Miſeries of all *Italy*. He there particularly affirms (*ver.* 5.) that the *Roman* Empire was raiſed to its Greatneſs by the Gods for the Devotion of the People.

* I cannot help taking notice of the Inſolence and Defiance of Heaven which appears in the Names that are given to the Ships of the *Britiſh* Navy; and the Genius of the People appears as plain in this as in Things of greater Conſequence. The *Victory*, the *Dreadnought*, the *Superb*, the *Terror*, the *Thunder*, and the *Lightning*, ſeem to me very improper Names for frail Veſſels liable every Moment to be ſwallowed up by the devouring Waves, whenever it ſhall pleaſe Him, who has the Power of them, to give them ſuch a Commiſſion.

ſevere Scrutiny, and the convincing Proof of the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, which it has produced, if there be at this Day a more numerous Party of Deiſts, who are ſuch merely from Ignorance and Senſuality, than of Chriſtians who are ſuch in Belief and Practice from a fair and thorough Examination.

What avails it, that any Man, who will fairly enquire into the Chriſtian Religion, will find, that the Scheme, as it ſtands in the Scriptures taken literally, is ſo far from being unreaſonable, that the Main of it was thought of and earneſtly wiſhed for by the wiſeſt Heathens *; that its Doctrines, if they were not true, are of that ſublime and heavenly Nature as to make every wiſe and good Man admire them, and wiſh they were true; that its Proofs are the moſt irreſiſtible that ever were laid before Mankind upon any Occaſion, *viz.* the Completion of almoſt innumerable ancient Prophecies in our Saviour's own Perſon, ſome written ſeveral thouſand Years before his Appearance, beſides thoſe given by himſelf, the Completion of many of which is unqueſtionable; the Performance of almoſt innumerable Miracles by him and his Apoſtles; the Atteſtation of his Reſurrection by Multitudes, ſome of whom performed many Miracles, and at laſt gave their Lives in Atteſtation of the Truth of it, in which it was impoſſible they themſelves ſhould be deceived, and as plain from the miſerable Lives and Deaths they expoſed themſelves to by their Adherence to this Religion, that they could have no Deſign of impoſing upon others? What avails it, that the firm Belief and ſtrict Obſervance of Chriſtianity would raiſe the Human Nature almoſt to the Pitch of the Angelic? It is the ſingle Objection, of its fixing beyond Diſpute the Bounds of Right and Wrong, and pointing its Cannon directly againſt our favourite Luſts and Paſſions, that diſguſts us at it, and puts us upon ſo many wretched Shifts to prove that falſe which we dare not allow to be true.

Is there a Fop in any of the Inns of Court, whoſe Reading goes no farther than the Pamphlets he ſubſcribes for at the Coffee-houſe, or an *Oxonian* in his ſecond Year, whoſe Knowledge ſerves only to enable him to call a *Horſe*, a *Houſe*, or a *Table*, by a different Word, in *Latin*, *Greek*, and *French*, that does not take upon him to caſt Reflections on the awful and

* See Dr. *Clarke*'s Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion, *p.* 308, *&* *ſeq.*

and ſolemn Doctrines of the Chriſtian Religion, and this in the very Age, in which a *Newton*, a *Clarke*, and a *Locke*, (a Triumvirate which no Age ſince the Appearance of Chriſtianity can exceed) have declared their Belief, and exerted the utmoſt Force of their Genius in demonſtrating the Truth of it, and without even pretending to have found out one new Difficulty in it, one Fallacy in the Arguments formerly applied in Defence of it, or ſo much as knowing the beſt Objections againſt it, much leſs the ſatisfying Anſwers which have been made to thoſe Objections.

Nor does the Irreligion of the Age appear more ſhocking in any ſingle Inſtance, than in the modern Education of Youth; for from thence there is no Manner of Proſpect of any Cure of the Evil; but on the contrary, every Appearance of Religion's ſinking more and more in the Nation with every ſucceeding Generation. It is notorious, that the Immorality of the Youth of one of our Univerſities is grown to ſuch a Height, that it deſerves at this Day more properly to be ſtiled, The Seat of the Vices, than of the Muſes. Nor is it to be doubted, but that it is in the Power of the learned Gentlemen who have the Charge of the Youth at that Univerſity, to remedy, or at leaſt in a great Meaſure to reſtrain this Evil. I ſhould be glad to hear of any Number of Schoolmaſters, public or private, who make a Conſcience of teaching the Children committed to their Charge to form rational Conceptions of the Chriſtian Religion, or of the Duties of common Morality; for, having made ſome Enquiry myſelf into the general Practice of Inſtructors of Youth, I muſt own I have, to my great Concern, found that thay have generally thought they had diſcharged their Duty to them, if they made them Scholars, though they did not uſe the leaſt Endeavour to make them Chriſtians, or honeſt Men. The Truth is, in this Age both Parents and Inſtructors of Youth have too good a Reaſon for not teaching others the Principles of Chriſtianity, *viz.* Becauſe they themſelves neither know them, nor deſire to know them. And they have likewiſe as good a Reaſon for not teaching the Duties of Morality, *viz.* Becauſe every Leſſon of that Sort, which they muſt teach, is a Satyr upon their own Lives. At this Rate, how many Ages, upon a reaſonable Computation, may any Senſe of Religion be expected to remain in this unhappy Country (if Heaven ſhould ſuffer us ſtill to hold our Place among

among the Nations) since every rising Generation falls behind their Fathers in the Knowledge and Practice of it?

To what a deplorable State of Irreligion must that Nation be reduced, in which many of the Men, who should be the last to give up the Spirit and Power of Christianity, are got into the same epidemic Unbelief and Immorality that has over-run the rest of the Nation? That in *England* at this Day, too many of that Order of Men, whose Business it is to support, by their Doctrine and Example, the Belief and Practice of Christianity, have betrayed their important Trust. That they have made themselves too obnoxious to the Reflections of the Enemies of Religion, by engaging themselves in Secular Schemes for Preferment, and some by notoriously immoral Lives, is a Truth not less certain than melancholy. I am aware, that in this Tract I shall not have Occasion to touch upon any Subject more tender and delicate than this, and that it is very difficult to attack a Sett of Clergy without wounding Religion through their Sides. And, if the Objections against those of the present Age could be ascribed to human Frailty, I should with Pleasure do my best to palliate and excuse them, instead of exposing them to public View, being in all Cases, and this especially, of Opinion, that private Offences ought to be reproved in private, and that Deeds of Darkness ought to remain in Darkness. But what avails it, that I or any other Writer carefully conceal the Faults of the Clergy, if too many of their own Body expose their Shame, by embroiling themselves in Politics and Party Causes, to the Neglect and Disgrace of their sacred Function, by indulging themselves in all the Luxury of Theatres, Music-Gardens, Wine and Feasting, and some in other Kinds of a more infamous Nature? The Practices of a Set of Clergy of a Character preferable to those of this Age, drew upon them the severe Rebukes of two of their own Order, who thought it necessary to reprove them from the Press; whose Proceeding will sufficiently justify mine, especially as their Names are no less than those of Archbishop *Tillotson* and Bishop *Burnet* *.

To proceed, how can a People pretend to have any Sense or Love of Religion in their Hearts, who never have it in their Mouths? We know that Mankind love the Riches, Pleasures, and Honours of this World by this certain Token,

* *Tillotson*'s Serm. *Vol.* I. *p.* 461. *Burnet*'s Pastoral Care.

that

that they are ever talking of them, and nothing but them. But as to Religion, I appeal to every judicious Perſon in the Nation, whether ſuch a Thing is now to be heard of any where in Town and Country, as a Converſation, in which religious Subjects are the prevailing ones, kept up with any Reliſh or Satisfaction in any mixed Company; and whether, on the contrary, they don't find, that the few, who love ſuch Subjects of Converſation, are obliged carefully to avoid them in all but ſelect Companies, as generally diſagreeable. It is a wiſe and juſt Saying of our Saviour, "Out of the Abundance "of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaketh." Were there as much Love of Religion in our Hearts as there is of worldly Honour, Profit, or Pleaſure, our Converſation would favour as much of it, as now it does of them.

Another fearful Inſtance and Effect of the Irreligion of the Age, is the horrid Contempt of judicial Oaths exacted at entring upon almoſt every Office, from the higheſt down to that of a Scavenger, with thoſe of the Cuſtom-houſe and Exciſe, and thoſe yet more ſhocking, if poſſible, which are required at Elections for Members of Parliament.

What makes this Particular the more deplorable, is, that theſe Oaths anſwer no Purpoſe, but to lay a Load of Guilt upon the Nation: For it is not to be ſuppoſed that any Perſon who has not Virtue enough to reſiſt the Temptation of a Bribe, or of defrauding the Revenue, or of betraying his Truſt, will have Virtue enough to refuſe an Oath he does not intend to keep, to anſwer a preſent Purpoſe; eſpecially conſidering how little Solemnity or Significancy there is in the Form of the Oath, and in the manner of adminiſtring it, which accordingly ignorant and thoughtleſs People ſwallow with the greateſt Indifference, regarding the kiſſing of the Book no more than as a mere inſignificant Ceremony.

For proving the Frequency of the ſhocking Crime of Perjury, there needs no curious Enquiry, nor dirty raking into dark Scenes of Corruption. Whoever knows any thing of Elections, and Cuſtom-houſe Practices, knows that there it walks in open Day-light; that a great many thouſand Electors muſt be perjured at every Election, of which the many ſtrict Laws againſt Bribery ſhew the Senſe of the Legiſlature itſelf; that Cuſtom-houſe Oaths are become a ſtanding Term of Ridicule; and that the Oaths taken upon entring on moſt Places and Offices, are taken without ſo much

as being intended to be kept, many of them being so strict, as to render it almost impracticable to keep them.

Good God! what a Scene of Perjury is here. And how great must be the Mercy of that insulted Being, who suffers such a wicked People to live upon his Earth, without commanding her to open her Mouth and swallow us up!

If there is not a more daring Crime committed among Men, than calling the God of Truth to witness a Falshood; if no Crime ever was more frequent in any Nation than Perjury is in *England* at this Day; and if the abovementioned Oaths, to which all this Perjury is owing, are of no manner of Advantage for preventing Bribery, Infidelity in Offices, or Frauds to the Prejudice of the Revenue; if all these Things are so, and if it be not yet Time to consider of a speedy Redress for this Grievance, I know not when it will.

If there were any Love of Religion or Piety left among us, it would appear from the Fulness of the Places of public Worship, and from our constant keeping up among us the Practice of worshipping God in private Families. But we shew by our Indifference to every thing That has the least Relish of Religion in it, that we have forgot the God that made us. Indeed we are now grown so very polite, that we are above asking a Blessing of Him who only can bestow it upon the common Comforts of Life, or thanking Him, whose Creatures we have been consuming, for his Bounty in feeding and supporting us.

Should I pretend to give a View of the Wickedness of the Theatre, I should not know where to begin, or to what Length the Subject would carry me. For whether I insisted on the Lewdness or Impiety of most of the Plays themselves, on the infamous Characters of the Actors and Actresses, on the scandalous Farces they commonly tag the gravest Plays with, or above all, on the inhumanly impudent Dances and Songs, with which they lard them between the Acts; I say, which soever of these Particulars I insisted on, each of them would furnish Matter for a great many Pages; and much more, if I should enter upon a full View of them all. Indeed the Theatre is at present on such a Footing in *England*, that it is impossible to enter it, and not come out the worse for having been in it; for now-a-days, a good Play is no other than a Trap to draw in the modest and innocent, to a Love of Theatrical Entertainments; and the Minds of the Spectators are not the safer from being polluted and de-

bauched, tho' the Play itſelf be in the main decent and modeſt; ſince the ingenious Contrivance of the Managers entirely prevents the good Effect of any worthy Sentiment expreſſed in the Play, by introducing a painted Strumpet at the End of every Act, to cut Capers on the Stage in ſuch an impudent and unwomanly Manner, as muſt make the moſt ſhocking Impreſſions on every Mind; and leſt the Audience ſhould chance in ſpite of all this to carry away ſomewhat that might make their Hearts the better, a ludicrous and ſhameleſs Farce concludes the whole, and with one Stroke eraſes all the little Traces of virtuous Sentiments that were formed by the Play itſelf.

I only beg leave to aſk you, my dear Countrymen, for what Purpoſe you ſupport a ſacred Order of Men to teach you the pure and holy Laws of the Chriſtian Religion, and at the ſame time encourage by your Countenance and your Riches a Sett of the very Dregs of Human Nature, who make it their Buſineſs to debauch your Minds by their leud Compoſitions and wanton Geſticulations, to fill them with impure and vile Ideas, and to diſappoint the moſt diligent Endeavours of a Chriſtian Miniſtry? Surely it can never be conſiſtent with common Senſe to ſupport in the ſame Country one Order of Men for the Propagation of Virtue and Religion, and another for the Deſtruction of them; to maintain one Sett of People for promoting a Reformation of Manners, and another for promoting an univerſal Corruption.

It is the Saying of a great Man of the laſt Age, That upon ſome Accounts it were better that wicked Men would fairly renounce Chriſtianity, than continue to profeſs it, and at the ſame time diſgrace it by their ſcandalous Lives. And indeed it could be no ſuch Matter of Grief to good Men to ſee a Nation of *Barbarians* over-run with Vice and Debauchery, as to ſee this Kingdom, once illuſtrious for its Purity in Doctrine and Practice, celebrated for its Martyrs, and which pretends to be the grand Bulwark of the Proteſtant Religion; to ſee this Kingdom, I ſay, thus ſunk to a Pitch of Wickedneſs and Leudneſs in its publick Entertainments, which at *Athens*, where they worſhipped the unknown God, would have thrown the celebrated Diverſions of the Stage into utter Diſgrace.

And are theſe the favourite Pleaſures that ſo wholly ingroſs and bewitch a Chriſtian Nation, that we cannot live without them, even while an Enemy is laying waſte our Country, and

expected every Hour at our very Gates? For my Part, I cannot say I am sure, whether, if it had been our miserable Fate to have had our Metropolis burnt to the Ground, and the Inhabitants put to the Sword by the Rebels, they would not have found us upon their Arrival engaged in hearing Musick and seeing Plays, and whether Numbers had not been sent by them directly from the Play-house into another World *.

And

* That I may not appear singular in my Sentiments upon Theatrical Entertainments, I will add the Judgments of a few (out of innumerable that might be inserted) of the wisest Men of ancient and modern Times, which will strengthen what I have said.

We are told by *Plutarch*, that the great and wise Legislator *Solon*, "upon seeing some of *Thespis*'s Pieces acted, struck his Staff "against the Ground, to shew his Dislike; as apprehending, that "these idle Stories, from Theatrical Representations, would soon "become Matters of Importance, and have too great a Share in "Life."

The Author of the *Dialogue on the Orators* makes this just Remark on the Character of the *Roman* People; "There are certain "Vices peculiar to this City, [*Rome*] which seem almost conceived "with them in their Mother's Wombs; such as the Taste of Theatrical Shews, Gladiators, and Horse-races. Are not these almost "the only Subjects of Conversation among the young People, and "indeed in all Companies? Is it probable, that a Mind intent "upon, and in a Manner besieged by these trifling Amusements, "should be very capable of applying to serious Studies?" *Rollin's* Ant. Hist. Vol. II. p. 251

"Of what Advantage (says *Plutarch*) have Tragedies been to "*Athens*? We find, that the Prudence of *Themistocles* inclosed "the City with strong Walls; that the Fortitude of *Miltiades* "preserved its Liberties; and that the Conduct of *Cimon* gained "it the Empire of all *Greece*. If the Poetry of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles* "or *Euripides*, have obtained equal Advantages for the City of "*Athens* by delivering it from impending Calamities,——I consent "that Dramatic Pieces be ranked with Trophies of Victory; the "Poetic Scenes with the Fields of Battle; and the Compositions "of the Poets with the Exploits of the General." He concludes, that it was the greatest Imprudence for the *Athenians* to prefer Pleasure to Duty, the Passion for the Theatre to the Love of their Country, trivial Representations to the Application to publick Business, and to consume in useless Expence and tragic Entertainments the Funds intended for the Support of Fleets and Armies. Accordingly

And now, my dear Countrymen, what remains, or what more is in the Power of any private Perſon, than, after having thus laid before you a brief View of the National Guilt that has brought the late Troubles into our Land, to conclude this little

ingly King *Philip* of *Macedon*, inſtructed by the *Greeks* themſelves, knew to take the Opportunity of their Effeminacy, and to wreathe a Yoke around the Necks of all *Greece* and *Aſia*. See *Juſtin*, Book VII. chap. 6.

The Wiſdom of the *Roman* Legiſlature, foreſeeing the fatal Effects of Theatic Entertainments upon the Genius of the People, ordained by a ſtanding Law, that no Theatre ſhould laſt above one Month, *viz.* during the Time of the publick Shews, though erected at ever ſo great an Expence, ſo that even that of *M. Scaurus*, which muſt have coſt above a Million of our Money, underwent the ſame Fate. *Pompey* however had Power enough to break through this wiſe Regulation, and was the firſt that ever erected a perpetual Theatre, with Seats, which had never before been permitted, leſt the People ſhould have deſired to indulge themſelves too much in thoſe Diverſions. It is very well known, that from this Period the *Roman* Virtue declined apace, and never recovered itſelf.

Hear what the great Biſhop *Burnet* (than whom no Man better knew Human Nature) ſays of the Stage.

" The Stage is the great Corrupter of the Town, and the bad " People of the Town have been the chief Corrupters of the " Stage, who run moſt after thoſe Plays that moſt defile the " Stage.——The Poets pretend their Deſign is to diſcourage Vice; " but they really do recommend it in the moſt effectual Manner. " It is a Shame to our Nation and Religion, to ſee the Stage ſo " reformed in *France*, and ſo polluted ſtill in *England*.——Till " another Scene appears, certainly our Plays are the greateſt Debauchers of the Nation." Concluſion of *Burnet's Hiſt.*

I ſhall add to Biſhop *Burnet*'s, the Thoughts of one of the kindeſt, moſt judicious and beſt of Men that this World ever produced, who never ſaid a hard Thing, but when the Good of Mankind required it, I mean Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, who in his Diſcourſe againſt corrupt Communication, ſpeaking of Plays, ſays, " They are in- " tolerable, and not fit to be permitted in a *civilized*, much leſs " in a *Chriſtian* Nation. They do moſt notoriouſly miniſter both to " Infidelity and Vice. By their Profaneneſs they are apt to inſtill " bad Principles into the Minds of Men, and to leſſen that Awe " and Reverence which all Men ought to have for God and Reli- " gion. And by their Leudneſs they teach Vice, and are apt to " infect the Minds of Men, and diſpoſe them to leud and diſſolute " Practices."

little Tract by earneſtly calling upon each particular Rank in the Nation to exert themſelves in their publick and private Stations for bringing about that general Reformation, which is neceſſary for averting a final and extirpating Judgment.

I only beg leave, firſt, to recount ſome remarkable Deliverances this Kingdom has had from the immediate Hand of God; to ſhew you what you owe him on the Score of mere Gratitude alone, if there were no other Engagement upon you.

To take no Notice of the many wonderful Preſervations of the Life of Queen *Elizabeth*, of immortal Memory, from almoſt innumerable Plots of the Papiſts againſt her Life, (which were in effect the Preſervation of this Nation from Popery and Slavery) ſince the Year 1588, a Period of little more than one hundred and fifty Years, it is eaſy to ſhew that this Nation has been ten or twelve different Times in imminent Danger of the total Deſtruction of its Liberties civil and religious, and as often been delivered by immediate and indiſputable Interpoſitions of Divine Providence.

In the Year 1588 K. *Philip* of *Spain* ſent againſt us a Fleet of ſuch Force, that he did not ſcruple impiouſly to call it, *The invincible Armada*; nor indeed had the World till that Time ever ſeen ſuch a powerful Naval Armament. The Seas were overſpread with their Sails, and the Ocean groaned with their Weight. Scarce had they diſplayed their Pride, to the inviting Gales, when He, who holds the Winds in his Treaſures, let them looſe upon the Face of the great Deep. He commanded them to lift up the ſtormy Waves of the Sea. They mounted up to the Heavens, they went down to the Deeps; their Souls melted within them becauſe of their Trouble. The Almighty triumphed over them glorioufly. Their Fleets and their Warriors he caſt into the Sea. They ſunk to the Bottom as a Stone. His Right-hand became glorious in Power; his Right-hand daſhed in Pieces the Enemy.

The pious Queen, who then ſwayed the *Engliſh* Sceptre, ſcrupled not to aſcribe the Glory of this Victory to the immediate Interpoſition of Heaven, ordering a Medal to be ſtruck with this Inſcription, "He blew with his Wind, and "they were ſcattered *."

In the Year 1596 another Attempt was made by the ſame Power to make a Deſcent upon *England* with a very formidable Naval Armament. "But a violent Storm ariſing "in

* AFFLAVIT DEUS, ET DISSIPANTUR.

" in the midſt of the Voyage, ſeveral of the Ships were loſt, " and the reſt ſo diſperſed, that the Fleet was rendered un- " ſerviceable for this Year. Thus *Elizabeth* had the Pleaſure " of hearing, that it was diſabled from hurting her, before " ſhe knew of its ſailing.*" The Winds in their Courſes fought for *England*. He that is mighty hath done glorious Things for us; he hath ſcattered the Proud in the Imagination of their Hearts. He hath taken our Enemies in the very Snare themſelves had laid for us.

In the Year 1605, when that infernal Power, who has long been drunk with the Blood of Saints and Martyrs, found her curſed Machinations againſt us diſappointed; ever thirſting, ever inſatiable of Blood and Slaughter, ſhe reſolved to ſtrike a Stroke, that might at once cut off the Hopes of all who oppoſed her Intereſt in this Land, by hurrying our King and ſome hundreds of the principal Men and chief Rulers of the Nation, out of the World by one Exploſion of a Mine of Gun-powder †. Deeply was the Plot laid, and dark and ſecret was the helliſh Contrivance: But that Eye, from which the Darkneſs hides no more than the Light, before which Hell is naked and Deſtruction uncovered, ſaw all their horrid Combinations, confounded their Devices, and brought them in Ruin and Vengeance upon their own Heads ‡.

From the Year 1685 to 1688 we ſaw our Royal Seat filled by a Popiſh Prince ‖, and his Court and many principal Places of Power and Truſt by Perſons devoted to the ſame Intereſt. We ſaw the Laws of *England*, the Barriers of our Freedom, broken; a ſtanding Army eſtabliſhed to force a deviliſh Religion and an arbitrary Government down our Throats; our Church put under the Inſpection of Popiſh Biſhops, and her true Proteſtant

* The Words of *Rapin*, vol. II. p. 146.

† Thence called the Gun-powder Plot, being a Popiſh Scheme for blowing up the Parliament-houſe.

‡ It was diſcovered by the Miſcarriage of a Letter to a particular Nobleman, whom they were willing to ſave from the general Deſtruction. " For (ſays *Rapin*) God abhorring ſo deteſtable a " Plot, inſpired one of them with a Deſire to ſave *William* Lord " *Monteagle*, &c." By a Letter ſent to him the Whole was found out and defeated. *Rapin*, vol. II. p. 170.

‖ King *James* II.

Protestant Fathers and Overseers discarded and imprisoned *. We saw a bloody Inquisition setting up in our Country, tho' under a softer Name †, and begun to feel the Iron Teeth of that merciless Religion ‡.

These were Scenes of Gloominess and Darkness. These were Days of Horror and Despair. How didst thou then, fair Liberty, and thou, star-crown'd Religion ‖, lift thy streaming Eyes to Heaven, and how didst thou, O my Country, faint with thy deadly Wounds, how didst thou lie all pale and ghastly, wallowing in thy Blood. Come glorious Deliverer, come immortal *William*; for thee is reserved the Honour of saving a miserable Nation from spiritual and temporal Slavery. He came; he saw; he delivered. The inconstant Winds seemed proud to serve him, and the swelling Floods smoothed their Rage to waft him over. They varied and calmed it in the Minute when he needed them, and his Fleet was carried prosperously through the Seas, while that of the Enemy was shut up in Port. The Winds breathed a gentle and favourable Gale, till his Fleet was secured, and then broke in a violent Storm upon that which came against him. They were scattered and forced into Ports, and their Hopes and the Fears of the Protestants at the same time extinguished §.

In the Year 1690 when in the bloody Field of *Boyne* our heroic Deliverer ** was bravely shewing his Love of this Country and his Contempt of Death, in its most dreadful Form; while thousands fell at his right Hand and his left, the sure Messenger of Death †† passed so near him as to violate his sacred Person; but at the same time passed guiltless of his important Life. A sure Proof, that the Eye of Providence watched over him, and that the Hand of God was

E around

* Seven Bishops put in the Tower for presenting a Petition to the King in favour of Religion and Liberty.

† Commission for Ecclesiastical Affairs.

‡ Several hundreds arbitrarily executed by Judge *Jeffereys* and General *Kirk*.

‖ *Rev.* xii. 1.

§ See Bishop *Burnet*'s Account, who was himself in the Fleet. *Burnet*'s Hist. vol. I. p. 787.

** King *William*.

†† A Cannon-Ball which grazed his Shoulder. *Burnet*'s Hist. vol. II. p. 50.

around him, to ward off every fatal Blow. For had he fallen at that critical Time, the glorious Labours of those worthy Patriots and of that excellent Prince who wrought our Deliverance, had been lost; the Hopes of the Protestants dashed; the Revolution again unhinged, and Popery again let loose upon us.

In the Year 1692 a formidable Armament was brought to the opposite Coast*, and embarked to invade us, when we were in no Condition to resist it†. Their Fleet was even got into our Seas before ours was ready to receive them: but its Course was soon stopped, and that for some time, by Winds contrary to them, but so favourable to us, that our whole Force was brought together before they could advance. Upon this followed the most glorious Naval Victory *England* ever gained, with the Destruction of the best Part of the Enemy's Fleet on their Coast and in their very Sight. In this whole Affair there was such a Conjunction of extraordinary Interpositions of Providence, that he, who had the greatest Share in the Action ‖, thought it no Diminution of his Honour to reckon up a whole Train of them, and to acknowledge, that the Success of that happy Day was owing to the immediate Hand of God.

This fatal Defeat of our Enemies seemed sufficient to free us from all Apprehensions for some Time: but they again resolved in the Year 1696 to make another Attempt, and that upon a surer Footing, with the additional Improvement of an Assassination ‡, to make way for it. This black Contrivance, worthy only of *France* or *Rome*, was discovered but two Days before it was to have been executed by some who were practised on to engage them in it. And as the Design was thus disappointed at home; so by a kind Providence our Fleet, which was designed to be sent to a very great Distance,

* *Cherbourgh* and *La Hogue*.

† "If the Winds had favoured the *French*, they themselves "would have brought us the first News of their Design."——The Words of Bishop *Burnet* in his Hist. vol. II. p. 93.

‖ Admiral *Russel*.

‡ Of K. *William*. There was also a Design on foot of the same sort in the Year 1692: but I pass over it; the immediate Interposition of Providence for defeating it being less clear and more liable to be disputed than in the present Case. See *Burnet*'s Hist. vol. II. p. 95. And p. 148, of another Assassination-plot.

Diſtance, was kept in our Ports by croſs Winds, contrary to what is ordinary at that Seaſon of the Year. And when the ſame Perſon who formerly had the Command, when the ſame Enemy was defeated, took it upon him again, and went with our Fleet toward their Coaſt, till they ſaw the Deſign impracticable, and diſperſed themſelves §.

Another remarkable Criſis was in the Year 1714 *. It is very well known to Numbers now alive, that the reſtleſs and indefatigable Enemy of the Proteſtant Religion and our preſent happy Eſtabliſhment had for a conſiderable time been undermining them, and ſecretly working their Ruin; that their Schemes were in the above-mentioned Year in great Forwardneſs; too many Well-wiſhers to that Intereſt, from which we have every thing to fear, having wormed themſelves into the Court of Queen *Anne*, and into Places of great Power and Influence; that ſeveral violent Steps were actually taken, the ſure Preſages of what we had to expect; that all things were going forward in the faireſt Manner they could deſire for reducing us again under the Power of the ſame Family we had been before obliged to exclude from the *Britiſh* Succeſſion, a Family educated in Principles of Cruelty and Blood, and beſides exaſperated by their late Diſgrace. Heaven at this dangerous Juncture again looked down upon us. Death was ſent in the critical Moment to cut ſhort the Royal Life, before the fatal Schemes were ripe for bringing in a Popiſh Pretender to fill the Throne †. The Conſequence of which remarkable Providence was, that the Affairs of *England* immediately went into another Channel. The Schemes of the diſaffected Party were unhinged, and the illuſtrious Father of the auguſt Prince, who now happily ſways the Sceptre over us, came in time to prevent them, and once more baffle their Pretenſions; and this without ſo much as a ſingle Blow ſtruck or one Drop of Blood ſhed to make way for his Acceſſion.

The famous Year 1715 ‡ is yet freſh in the Memory of many among us. We have not yet forgot how the inſulting

§ *Ibid.* p. 164, *&c.*

* See *Rae*'s Hiſtory of the Rebellion.

† The *Jacobite* Party openly declared, that had the Queen lived ſix Weeks longer, and Things continued as they then were, their Schemes had been ready for Execution.

‡ *Ibid.*

Enemy plumed themſelves with as ſanguine Hopes of gaining their Point, as tho' they had never been once diſappointed. We have not forgot that they raiſed in our Country an Army of Rebels, which almoſt ſhook the Pillars of the *Britiſh* Throne. It is alſo very well known, that they placed their chief Dependance on that ambitious Power *, which has all along been the Patron of their baffled Cauſe: And what the Conſequence muſt have been, if Providence had ſuffered *France* to land a powerful Body of Forces to ſecond them, while the whole regular Force in the Nation did not amount to ten thouſand Men, is very obvious. But he, who at his Pleaſure cuts ſhort the diſtant Proſpects of ambitious Men, who has in his Hand the Breath of the mightieſt Monarchs, by one timely Stroke put an End to the Life of a King † who had been for threeſcore Years the Plague and Scourge of *Europe*, reduced his Kingdom to the precarious State of a Minority, and diſabled it from lending that Aſſiſtance to our Enemies, which they expected. The Upſhot was, that an eaſy Conqueſt gave them into our Hands; a few the Government puniſhed; but a much greater Number their unequalled Lenity ſpared; which Lenity they have very ill requited by their late ungrateful and brutal Attempt to overturn the very Government to which ſome of them owe their Lives.

It is alſo freſh in our Memories, how the ſame implacable Power, that has ſo long been the Fire-brand of Chriſtendom, only in *February* 1743 got together againſt us an Embarkation conſiſting of ſixteen thouſand Men, with Arms for the Friends of the *Jacobite* Intereſt in our own Country, to the Number of many thouſand Stands beſides. That they were ſuffered but juſt to peep out of their Harbours, and were preſently by a Storm wrecked, ſunk, and daſhed on the Shore; that the Bodies of many Hundreds were taken up on the *French* Coaſt, and that the Fleet was totally diſabled from hurting us, before we ſet ſail to attack it ‡. As if that kind Providence, which ſo tenderly watches over us, had been unwilling to let us take the Trouble of conquering our Enemies, or run the Hazard of ſuffering any Loſs from them,

* *France.*

† *Lewis* XIV. of *France.*

‡ See the Gazettes of *February* and *March* 1743.

and

and chose rather to bid us "stand still and see the Salvation "of God."

The last remarkable Interposition of Providence in our Favours, that I shall mention, is what has given Birth to this Address. An Interposition neither less kind nor less conspicuous than any of the above-mentioned, and which I hope neither we nor our Children shall ever suffer to slip out of our Memories, nor its good Effects on our Lives and Conduct to cease; but that the Year 1745 shall be remembered, among the other memorable Years, with due Gratitude, to latest Posterity, for a Deliverance from a Dearth of Corn and a bloody Civil War, or rather a general Massacre, of each of which we have been this Year within the Distance of only one Fortnight, or perhaps less, and from both which the Hand of God alone hath thus far saved us; unless any one will pretend, that the Winds and Rains of Heaven are at our Disposal.

Can we look back upon the hideous Precipice we have so narrowly escaped, without Hearts full of Gratitude and stedfast Resolutions of future Obedience to our Almighty Deliverer? And are not these a Sett of Deliverances, which for their uncommon Nature and Circumstances may be applied as Arguments for a Providence sufficient to silence Infidelity itself?

And now what so reasonable an Account can be given why this peculiar and constant Care has been exercised over us, but that Providence has thought fit to set this Nation up as a Fence against that worldly Ecclesiastic Power, whose Business has ever been to subvert all true Religion and Moral Virtue, and which has for these twelve hundred Years been scattering Delusion, Impiety, Corruption, Fire, Sword, and Desolation over the Kingdoms of the Earth. I know it is not in the Eye of Heaven of such Consequence, what particular Sect or Subdivision of Religion a Nation or Person is of, where due Reverence is had to those Laws he hath established by his sacred Messenger, who came to be the Light of the World. But the Difference between the Popish and Protestant Religions is the same that is between Darkness and Light; between incredible Absurdities and certain Truths; between diabolical Cruelty and heavenly Benevolence; between Satan and Jesus Christ. It is therefore no Wonder, though the Almighty has determined to prevent by the most singular Interpositions the general Establishment of this Infernal

nal Religion; which would prove the general Eſtabliſhment of Irreligion and Vice, and the rooting out of Chriſtianity and Morality. And ſhall we, for the ſake of a little guilty Pleaſure, and fleeting Amuſement, drop, or give up this pure and ſublime Religion, which God himſelf has by ſo many viſible Interpoſitions taken care to preſerve among us? I mention giving up the Proteſtant Religion for Pleaſure, becauſe nothing in the World is ſo likely to open a Door to Popery as unbounded Luxury and Voluptuouſneſs; it being a Religion calculated for the Indulgence and Gratification of the Luſts and Appetites of Men.

Let us not flatter ourſelves, that our Work is over, now we hope the late Danger is pretty well over. It was ſent for a Trial; and if it do not work its Effect upon us, it will only make way for a more terrible Judgment. We have been, as I ſaid before, threatned in this one Year with a Dearth of Corn and a Civil War, ſupported by an Invaſion from abroad. The Third National Judgment, when Famine and the Sword prove ineffectual for the Reformation of a People, is commonly the Peſtilence: And for God's ſake let us think in Time before that terrible Scourge be ſent amongſt us, how we ſhall get free of it, as we hope thro' divine Help we ſhall ſoon be of the others. National Guilt can only be puniſhed in this preſent Life, the Puniſhments in the next being for perſonal Guilt. We are not therefore to dream, that the Governor of the World will paſs from his uſual Method of dealing with Nations, out of any Partiality for us. On the contrary, we may aſſure ourſelves he will not be always inſulted; but will ſend ſuch Judgments as ſhall produce either a Reformation or a final Extirpation.

The preſent Juncture ſeems to be the Criſis that is to determine the Fate of this once illuſtrious Iſland, and you the Perſons in whoſe Power it is, by your good or bad Conduct, either to gain your Country that Favour and Protection of Heaven, which alone can ſupport you againſt all your Enemies, or to draw down upon it that almighty Vengeance, which can ſhake the Pillars of the beſt eſtabliſhed Empire in the World, and lay its Honour and its Pride in Ruins. And for the ſake of all that is dear to you, if you have any Regard for your Children, any Love for your Country, any Reverence for your Religion, or any Gratitude to your Almighty Deliverer, let the Time paſt be ſufficient to have loſt in Indolence and Pleaſure, and at laſt, before it be too late, reſolve to conſider

what is to be done for saving a sinking Nation. It will be ingrateful, impious and brutish to a Degree I hope you are not capable of, to despise so many signal Warnings, and to make no other Use of your so late remarkable Deliverance, but to return with so much the more Gust to your Follies, which have been a little, and but a little interrupted by your Danger.

There is the more Necessity to guard you against the Danger of giving yourselves up to impious Mirth and Wantonness upon the Return of your Tranquillity, because it is so well known, what a Flood of Wickedness over-ran the Nation after the Restoration of King *Charles* II. and the Deliverance it brought from Troubles of the same Kind as we have lately been alarmed with. Nor ought it to be forgotten, what a Succession of Judgments the Divine Providence at that Time brought upon this guilty Land, to shew that Heaven was displeased with so monstrous an Abuse of such a remarkable Deliverance. We engaged in a War with our next Neighbours* and best Allies, which proved as unsuccessful as it was unjust. A very considerable Part of our Naval Strength was destroyed by the Fire of the Enemy in our very Ports†. A devouring Pestilence was let loose among us, which heap'd our Streets with Dead ‡. A fearful Conflagration was suffered to over-power our Capital, and to humble the proudest City upon Earth to the Dust.‖ And need I then advise you to take Care how you again provoke such Wrath, and draw down such Vengeance upon your Heads? A People may trifle with Governors of their own setting up, and baffle both their Laws and the Sanctions annexed to them, which seems to be the *English* Notion of Liberty; but wo to that People who presume to trifle with the Almighty Governor of the World.

Upon you, my Lords and Gentlemen, who hold the first Ranks in the Nation, whether Sharers in the Legislative Power, or not; upon you it lies to begin the general Reformation, by your superior Example and Influence, which, you know, cannot fail to lead the Nation. Let but the Quality and Gentry enter into an Association, to live mostly in the

* The *Dutch*.

† The *English* Fleet burnt by the *Dutch* at *Chatham*. See *Burnet*'s Hist. Vol. I. p. 242.

‡ The Plague in *London*, which cut off an hundred thousand People. Ibid. p. 218.

‖ The Fire of *London*. Ibid. p. 229.

Country

Country upon their Eſtates, and within their Incomes; to countenance the publick Worſhip of God, and to ſupport a due Decorum in their own Families; and obſerve how long Extravagance and Impiety will continue in *Britain*. In whatever Light this Matter may appear to People of Birth and Quality, it is certain they are blameable, not only for their own perſonal Faults, but alſo in a great meaſure, for thoſe of their Inferiors, ſince their bad Example leads a whole People aſtray.

Of you, Right Reverend Fathers of the Church, it is expected, that you will neglect no Means in your Power for influencing the inferior Clergy, who have the immediate Charge of Souls committed to them, to make Conſcience of inſtructing their People in their Duty, and of warning them againſt the Danger of Popery, of which you know they have of late grown exceſſively negligent; and that you will uſe all proper Means for coming at the true Characters of the ſeveral Clergy of your reſpective Dioceſes, and ſhew particular Marks of your Favour to ſuch as live exemplary Lives, and are diligent in the Execution of their Duty, and do your utmoſt to diſcountenance thoſe whoſe Lives are not at leaſt ſober and decent, and who do not ſhew that they have the ſpiritual Advantage and Reformation of the Manners of their People at Heart.

I the more chearfully, and with the better Hopes, addreſs you upon this Occaſion, Right Reverend Fathers, becauſe I have, with great Satisfaction, ſeen ſome of you exert yourſelves glorioufly in the Cauſe of Religion and your Country, ſince the Beginning of theſe preſent Troubles. I ſhould think no better Opportunity than the preſent, could offer for your laying aſide whatever may have the leaſt Appearance of Luxury or Superfluity in your Expence, and can any way be ſpared for charitable Uſes, I hope, I need not recommend to a Body of Chriſtian Prelates, the Chriſtian Virtue of Charity, from Conſiderations taken from Scripture: But I will appeal to yourſelves, whether, by a hundred Pounds a Year beſtowed in Charities, you are not likely to gain more of the Love and Eſteem of Mankind, than by a thouſand laid out in the Pomp and Grandeur of Life. I mention this, becauſe the uſual Pretence for the Biſhops keeping what they call a Rank, and making a Figure, is to give them Weight and Authority among the People; which End I am ſure, would be much more effectually gained, by laying out all above the Conve-

nienties

niencies of Life in judicious and well chosen Charities. Let me add, that this Virtue is peculiarly graceful in your sacred Order, and that you may contribute as much this Way to averting the Vengeance of Heaven from your Country, as any Way; according to the Judgment of that Honour of the Christian Priesthood, Archbishop *Tillotson*, who was himself a glorious Pattern of this Virtue. "I have often thought "(says he) that the extraordinary Charity of this Nation— "next to the infinite Mercy and Goodness of Almighty "God, had had a very particular Influence upon our Preser- "vation and Deliverance from those terrible Calamities that "were just ready to rush in upon us."

And upon you, Reverend Pastors of the Church, it is not to be expressed, how much depends with Regard to the State of Virtue and Religion in the Nation. It is certain, no Rank in it has more Influence in forming the Manners of the People, unless perhaps the Great may be excepted. And it is likewise certain, that no Order of Men in the Nation, has the Morals of the People committed to their Charge so properly as you have. Of your Hands therefore, if our Destruction be decreed, you may expect a great Part of the Blood of your expiring Country will be required*.

If there is any Foundation for hoping that the Divine Providence will not give us up to our Enemies, nor extirpate us by any immediate Judgment from his own Hand, it is, that, as I said before, we are the only feeble Bulwark of the Protestant Religion; and it is to be hoped, it is not the Scheme of Providence, that the Protestant Religion be suffered wholly to sink. But, if by our vicious Lives we disgrace our Religion, or if by our mad Pursuit of Pleasure we drop all Sense of Religion, or if through the Carelessness of our Watchmen we degenerate into Popery, why should we hope the Protestant Religion will stand as a Fence betwixt us and the Vengeance of Heaven?

Nor is less to be expected of you at this important Juncture, Right Worshipful Gentlemen of the Magistracy in Town and Country, in whose Hands the executive Power is lodged. It lies wholly in your Breasts, whether that Body of Laws, which regards the Morals of the People, shall be a Terror and Restraint upon Evil-doers, or a gigantic but harmless Bugbear. It has long been the Complaint of the

* See *Ezek.* iii. 20.

most judicious, that no Country is better furnished with Laws, and yet no Country is more lawless than *England*. It is in your Power, Gentlemen, to wipe off this Reproach whenever you please; for the public Business may always be done, where Magistrates know how to command, and will see themselves obey'd.

It is wholly in the Power of your numerous and wealthy Body, worthy Citizens of *London*, to regulate the Conduct of all the trading Part of the Nation. If you will set before them a Pattern of Industry, Sobriety, and Oeconomy, you will see how powerful your Example is, and how closely it is copied by the other trading Cities in the Kingdom. You have lately made a glorious Stand for the Support of publick Credit. Why should you not make as noble a one for the Support of publick Virtue? You have unanimously entered into Associations for the Defence of your Lives, and your Liberties Civil and Religious, against a *Popish* Pretender and his Adherents. Why should you not enter into Associations for the Restoration of the frugal, the industrious, the virtuous and religious Manners of your Fathers, against a Flood of Deism, of *French* Foppery, and of bewitching Pleasure, which over-runs the Land?

O *London*, *London*, how hast thou degenerated! Where are now those happy Days, when thy Greatness and Superiority to the other Cities of *England*, consisted more in thy superior Virtue and Piety, than in thy enormous Wealth, Trade, and Magnificence. Thou art the chief of the Cities of the Earth; thy Merchants are Princes; thy Commerce is extended from Sea to Sea, and from the rising to the Setting of the Sun. Thy Riches have exalted thee to Heaven; beware lest thy Pride humble thee to the Dust. For, when thy Sins have once brought upon thee the Hour of thy Destruction, it will not be in the Power of thy Riches, thy Commerce, or thy mighty Fleets to protect thee, much less will the infamous Tools and Panders to thy Luxury and Pleasure, serve to come between thee and the Vengeance which hangs over thee.

It is in your Power, learned Gentlemen, to whom the Instruction of Youth is committed; by infusing into their Minds a Set of rational Principles of Religion, to do a great deal toward providing a rising Generation to serve God, to support the Cause of Virtue, and to hand down the Protestant Religion to Posterity, after you are gone to receive the Reward

Reward of your pious Labours. And I doubt, whether any Thing could give this Country more reasonable Hopes of the Protection of Heaven, than the Prospect of a succeeding Generation likely to walk in the Ways of Virtue and Religion, for the Sake of whose Piety (though only seen in Futurity) God might think fit to spare the Nation.

You, Gentlemen, have the Opportunity of forming the Mind, at almost the only Time when it is capable of being impressed; I mean in Youth: For it is to be lamented, that in this Age of Wealth, Prosperity, and Luxury, the Minds of many People who are come to Years, are too stubborn to be bettered by any kind of Advice, whether given from the Pulpit, the Press, or in private. I know it is said on this Subject, though unreasonably, that those who have had the most pious Educations, are often seen to go shamefully astray from the good Ways they have been brought up in; and on that Account it is pretended, that a religious Education is of the less Consequence. The Assertion is true, and a melancholy Truth it is. But the Reasoning upon it is false. For it is not to be conceived, that a Person who has not had his Mind tinctured in his Youth with religious Principles, should in any future Part of his Life give himself up to a religious Practice. And therefore a religious Education is absolutely necessary, if we would give our Youth any Chance of ever becoming pious or virtuous Men. Further, the Advantage of a religious Education, upon a rational Foundation, appears even in the Course which Men of loose Lives take. Of which those, who have not had that Advantage, when they once get into the Ways of open Vice and Impiety, having no Principle within them, to stop them in their Career, are ever seen to ramble from one Folly to another, till Providence puts an End to the Course of their Lives and Impieties at once. But those, who have had their Minds tinctured with Principles of Virtue and Religion, though they sometimes miserably wander from the peaceful Ways of Sobriety, overpower'd by Heat of Youth and strong Temptation; whenever that youthful Heat abates, and the Temptation loses its Force, or some severe Affliction, the Result of their Follies, intervenes, are often found to return to the Temper of Mind their Education gave them, and tread those Paths again which they were formerly accustomed to.

If therefore you will make a Conscience of giving the Youth entrusted to your Care a rational View of the Christian

Religion, as it is the New Teſtament, and of that admirable Syſtem of Morality communicated to Mankind by it; eſpecially, if you will inculcate upon their Minds the Beauties and the indiſpenſable Obligation of thoſe ſublime and heavenly Precepts contained in that beſt Diſcourſe that ever was made to the Sons of Men, or ever will, till He who made it appears again, I mean our Saviour's Diſcourſe on the Mount, *Matth.* v. vi. vii. the Law, by which we are all to be judged at the laſt Day; if you will do theſe Things carefully and conſcientiouſly, regarding them as the moſt important Parts of your Duty to the Youth whoſe Education is entruſted to you, you will then contribute your proper Part toward bringing about the national Reformation ſo much wanted at this Day.

Nor ought I to let ſlip this Opportunity of addreſſing myſelf to you, my fair Countrywomen, nor of laying before you a View of your proper Duty and the Part you ought to act on this Occaſion. The Beauties and Graces of your Perſons and your Minds make you the proper Objects of the moſt tender Love and Affection of our Sex; and the Ordination of Heaven itſelf has put you under our immediate Protection. Your Characters as to Virtue and Vice greatly depend on your Fathers and Husbands; your tender Minds being naturally ſo pliant as to be ſuſceptible of whatever Impreſſions are made on them by our Sex. It is therefore the more melancholy a Conſideration, that by our Neglect of you, from too much falſe Indulgence and Fondneſs, your Minds have been ſuffered to grow wild, and your Paſſions and Deſires to ſhoot out into ſuch Extravagancies as are altogether unſuitable and ungraceful in the Female Character.

It is with Reluctance and Grief I accuſe you; and the more becauſe my Accuſation is but too juſt. For it is certain, that no ſmall Part of the National Guilt is to be charged to your Account. It is by no means to be denied, that in this gay and voluptuous Age many of you have given yourſelves up a great deal too much to the heightened Pleaſures of Theatrical and Muſical Entertainments, to the Neglect not only of all that is ſpiritual and ſacred, but alſo of thoſe domeſtic Cares, which are your proper Province. The unavoidable Effect of a conſtant Purſuit of the moſt innocent of theſe publick Diverſions muſt be, entirely to pervert your Minds from what is the only natural Sphere of Womankind, and what you were originally intended for by the Ordination of Heaven; for I will not ſtick to tell the proudeſt Beauty, that

ſhines

ſhines in the Front-box or in *Ranelagh*'s gay Alcove, bedecked in all the gaudy Plumage that Female Vanity can contrive to put together, that ſhe was originally formed for the plain and homely, but neceſſary and endearing Characters of a Wife and a Mother; and that all the various Ornaments of Pride, which fill her fantaſtic Brain, and disfigure the native Beauties of her Perſon, and all the giddy Hours ſhe paſſes in a Round of guilty Follies, falſely called Pleaſures and Diverſions, tend only to make her more and more unfit for what Nature deſign'd her for. Believe me, my dear Countrywomen, whenever you aim at any Thing elſe than to be dutiful Daughters, loving Wives, tender Mothers, prudent Miſtreſſes of Families, faithful Friends, and pious Chriſtians, you aim at ſomewhat that is quite out of Nature, and beſide the Intention of Heaven in making you rational Creatures. Will *Vauxhall* improve you in Oeconomy and Frugality, or *Ranelagh* in the domeſtic Arts that make Families happy? Will the bombaſtic Rant of the Playhouſe furniſh you with Maxims of Prudence, or its obſcene Ribaldry ſtore your Minds with the Graces of Modeſty and Virtue? How long muſt you die away to ſoft Strains of Muſic, or ſtudy to enter deeply into the various Theatric Excellencies of Stage-Heroes and Heroins, before you will be the fitter Companions for Men of Senſe? How long muſt you practiſe curling your Hair, fluttering your Fans, and overloading your Perſons with falſe Ornaments, before your Converſation will be ever new and ever entertaining to a Husband of Knowledge and Worth?

I beg leave only to ask you, Whether there is more of Happineſs or Uneaſineſs in the Life you generally live, even in your own Experience? Can you ſay you ever come away from the tumultuous Scenes of Pleaſure, which ingroſs the Bulk of your Time, without having your Minds diſturbed and thrown into a Ferment of irregular and exorbitant Deſires, which, if you lived a Life of Sobriety, Peace, and Retirement, would never have ſtirred in your Breaſts? Can you pretend that the Sight of gorgeous Dreſſes, of gaudy Paintings, and all the various Magnificence, which exquiſite Art ſupported by unbounded Extravagance can put together; that the hearing of the moſt melting Strains of Muſic, and of the moſt rapturous and paſſionate Flights of Poetry; can you pretend, I ſay, that theſe have any other Effect upon you than to fill your Fancies with a thouſand romantic Wiſhes

and

and Desires altogether inconsistent with your Station and above your Rank in Life, and to make your own Homes dull and tiresome to you? Is the Pleasure of being bowed to by a brainless Fop in a Side-box equal to the Satisfaction of Mind, which arises from the judicious Regard of a tender Parent or a loving Husband! What is the Happiness of being rumpled in a Crowd, compared to that of the peaceful Enjoyment of the Society of affectionate Relations and Friends, and the Endearments of a Race of promising Children?

If it be certain, that your Fortune chiefly depends upon your being well settled in Marriage; if it be certain, that a Lady's having a fine Taste in Pleasures, and delighting to pass her Life in the most expensive Diversions, serves rather (according to the Judgment of the Male Sex) to qualify her for a Mistress than a Wife; and if it be likewise certain, that at this very Time what chiefly deters the Youth from entering into the Marriage-State is the excessive Love of Idleness, Dress, and publick Diversions they observe in the Ladies, to which very few Incomes are equal; if these Things be certain and indisputable, methinks your Interest alone, and the Desire of being agreeable to the other Sex, if there were no other Motive, ought to influence you greatly, and put you upon correcting your Conduct. I assure you, however our Sex may flatter you in your present Taste for Pleasure, there are few of them such Fools, as not to know, that a fine Lady, who delights in gadding abroad in Pursuit of Pleasure, and when she stays at home in having her House crowded with idle Visitors, and who is too polite to lend a Hand to promote her Husband's Business, or to mind her own domestic Cares, is not in the least fit for being a Wife, but, instead of being a Help meet for a Man, is rather like to be a Clog and Incumbrance upon his Affairs.

But, though I have said, that the unavoidable Effect of your haunting the luxurious Entertainments of Plays and Music-Gardens, is, to pervert your Taste, and to turn the Bent of your Inclinations aside from your proper Sphere; I have not yet mentioned by far the most fatal Effect of a Life spent in this Manner. I appeal to the common Sense of Mankind, whether it is conceivable, that a Lady can frequent the lascious Theatre, be a Witness to all the Scenes of Impurity, and give ear to all the shameless Loudness of that Haunt of Vice and Obscenity, without having her Mind debauched and polluted; which is the surest Prelude to the

debauching of her Perſon. Nor indeed would I adviſe any Friend of mine to make his Addreſſes to one of thoſe gay Ladies, who ſpend much of their Time at Plays, as I ſhould not think his Honour the ſafer for being in the Power of a Woman, who had drawn her Principles of Modeſty and Virtue from *Drury-Lane* or *Covent-Garden*. But to add no more on this Head; a Word being enough to the Wiſe;

From what I have ſaid of the Faults of your Conduct, my dear Countrywomen, you may plainly ſee what is in your Power to do toward the general Reformation I have been recommending ſo earneſtly, to wit, to correct thoſe Faults. It is in your Power to lighten your Country of all that Part of the National Guilt, which your bad Conduct has brought upon it. It is even in your Power to do a great deal toward reforming the other Sex. Virtue, according to the well-known Saying of the Poet, is doubly amiable in a beautiful Perſon, and you can hardly fail of gaining her ſome Votaries among your Lovers and Huſbands. Upon the whole, if you will reſolve to retrench your Extravagancies, to employ your Time at home in the Works of domeſtic Oeconomy, Charity, Virtue, and Piety, and in filling up the Place you hold with regard to your Friends, your Relations, and your God; you will contribute what is properly in your Power toward the Reformation, and conſequently, the ſaving of your unhappy Country.

Laſtly, my dear Countrymen and Countrywomen in general, it is in the Power of every one of you (from the higheſt to the loweſt Rank in the Nation) to do ſomewhat toward the general Reformation; it is in the Power of every Man and every Woman in *England* to reform one, to add one to the Number of the truly Virtuous and Religious, for the ſake of whom incenſed Omnipotence may be moved to ſpare a guilty Nation, and lay the avenging Thunder-bolt aſide.

If by what I have written I ſhall in any meaſure diſoblige or diſguſt, and by that means fail of attaining my Deſign, it will give me infinite Concern: For I appeal to Him who knows the Secrets of all Hearts, that my Intention is to reform, and not to irritate.

Theſe are not Times for ſaying ſoft Things; and, if it were not that finding Fault is the moſt diſagreeable Work I ever engage in, it is eaſy to ſee only from the Liſt of epidemical Vices of the Age mentioned *Page* 8, moſt of which I have

I have only named, that I could have ſpun out a Volume upon that ungrateful Subject: But it is my conſtant Rule, never to write or ſay a harſh Thing againſt my Fellow Creatures, but when I have ſome Proſpect of gaining a ſuperior Advantage by it.

I conclude with my hearty Prayers, That God would be pleaſed to touch your Hearts, and put you upon amending your Conduct by whatever Means he may ſee proper, whether I am to have the Happineſs of being any way inſtrumental to it or not; and that he would graciouſly accept this poor Offering to his Honour, the Intereſt of the true Religion, and the Good of my Country.

FINIS.

A

Pre-existent Lapse

OF

HUMAN SOULS

Demonstrated from REASON;

SHEWN TO BE THE

Opinion of the most eminent Writers of Antiquity,

SACRED AND PROFANE:

Proved to be the Ground-work likewise of the

GOSPEL DISPENSATION;

And the

Medium through which many material Topics, relative thereto, are set in a clear, rational, and consistent Light:

By CAPEL BERROW, A. M.
Rector of Finningley, Nottinghamshire.

Δια της αμαρτιας Κατιρευνημεν.
S. Basil. de Spirit. Sanct.

——Make not impossible
That which but seems unlike. SHAKES.

LONDON:
Printed for J. WHISTON and B. WHITE, in Fleet-street; and G. KEARSLY, in Ludgate-street.
M.DCC.LXII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS the author was at a great distance from the press when the following sheets were printed off, it is to be hoped that the reader will be candid enough to overlook, or rather, to correct for himself the Errata (of which there are not a few, in the Greek quotations more especially) and other *exceptionable* expressions to be met with, which the author, had there been opportunity for it, would have prevented. Perspicuity, however, requires, that the passages below should be corrected as follow, viz.

Page 30. for, As the inherent depravity of the soul, &c. evidently proceeds from, *read*, evidently proceeds *not* from.—Page 78, from line the ninth, to line the third in p. 79, in which interval the author's meaning is sadly obscured, read as follows:

——— 'the same frail perishable mortal body which Adam 'contracted by his transgression, descending of course to his 'posterity; nothing but a miraculous interposition of divine 'power, an immediate *renovation* of the Protoplast's corporeal 'frame, could prevent this from being the unhappy conse-'quence. And though it may be a matter of surprise that 'means were not concerted, by which *supposed* innocence might 'escape being involved in the punishment due only to guilt, 'the generality of the Christian world is *taught* to *believe*, &c.

Page 28, for, or was implanted *read*, by its Creator, or *that it* was implanted, &c.—Page 31, for, from the hands of God; *and* then, *read*, *for* then.—Page 62, for, impieties to offend heaven, &c. fraud to entrap men, *read*, impieties wherewith to offend heaven, fraud by which to entrap men.—Page 72, for, should sit in darkness, &c. *and that* others, *read*, should *for a while* sit in darkness, &c. *that* others, &c.

To His Grace

THOMAS,

Lord Archbiſhop of

CANTERBURY,

AND

PRIMATE of all England.

My Lord,

MY aim in publiſhing the following work, is to illuſtrate truths, in which Chriſtianity is, as I humbly apprehend, eſſentially intereſted. I need not, therefore, I hope, apologize for throwing it under your Grace's patronage.

A freedom by which I am the leſs apprehenſive of giving offence, from the

the idea I entertain of your Grace's zeal for the honour, dignity, and furtherance of the Gospel Dispensation; to which, I flatter myself, the performance will not a little contribute.

I am, my Lord,

your Grace's

most dutiful Son,

and Servant,

Finningley, Feb. 9, 1762. CAPEL BERROW.

PREFACE.

READER,

DIVEST yourſelf of prejudices of every kind in your peruſal of the work before you, and judge of it with a freedom and independency becoming a *man*. Attend not, I pray you, to the manner of the performance, but to the matter of it, as the latter only is of any real conſequence, and the former, that, in which the author is not, perhaps, exceptionable.

A pre-exiſtent lapſe of human ſouls he cannot help regarding as a truth equally demonſtrable from ſcripture, as is the redemption of man by Jeſus Chriſt; nay, as that on which alone the goſpel œconomy is grounded.

If, however, it ſhould appear that he is miſtaken in his opinion, he hopes to be informed of ſuch miſtake with candour, and not calumny, from the pen of ſome one or other of the judicious and unprejudiced.

To proceed, therefore, without farther preface, to the work itſelf.

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CHAP. I.

A pre-exiſtent ſtate of ſouls deducible from ſeveral paſſages in Holy Writ.

§ 1. IT has been a matter of no ſmall concern to me to obſerve many paſſages in holy writ, which, to the impartial eye, ſeem either diſtantly alluſive to, or poſitively declarative of a ſtate pre-exiſtent, manifeſtly perverted, by miſjudging or miſguided interpreters, into a meaning quite foreign to the real truth.

Among which is, in the firſt place, the following paſſage from *Job*, ch. xxxviii. ver. 21.

God having queſtioned *Job* about the nature and place of light, ſays, according to our tranſlation of the paſſage, which is a bad one,

 " Knoweſt

" Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then " born, or becauſe the number of thy days is " great."

The meaning of which paſſage ſome interpret thus. " Thou waſt not ſo much as born, when I " ſet a diſtinction between day and night, be- " tween light and darkneſs. Thy days are not of " ſo long continuance. How then canſt thou " certainly know what was done before thou wert " born?" Others again read the whole verſe ironically, thus; " Thou knoweſt it, for thou " waſt then born, and for that the number of thy " years ſhould be great."

But the true reading of the paſſage is, I think, that of *Junius*, *Tremellius*, and ſome others.

" Noveris te *jam tum* natum fuiſſe, et numero " dies tuos eſſe multos."

" Know thou, or I would have thee to know, " that thou waſt then born, and that in number " thy days are many."

§ 2. Another ſcriptural paſſage, brought in ſupport of the ſame doctrine, is that ſaying of God to *Jeremias*: " Before I formed thee in the belly I " knew thee, and before thou cameſt out of the " womb I gave thee wiſdom." Ch. i. ver. 5.

Which, agreeably to the opinion of moſt commentators, contains nothing more than God's declaration to the prophet *Jeremias*, that, before his entrance into the womb, he had fore-ordained him to the office, to which he was then called. In like manner as *Joſias*, *Cyrus*, *John the Baptiſt*, *&c.* were co-operating inſtruments, fore-ordained by God for the better carrying on, and compleating the noble purpoſes of the Goſpel diſpenſation. But why muſt we ſuppoſe neceſſarily that all theſe were in *non-entity* at the time they were pre-

ordained

ordained to their ſeparate offices? Or rather, why ſhould we not conclude the very reverſe, from even that very emphatical expreſſion, I *knew* thee, *Agnovi* te, as rendered by *Junius* and *Tremellius*; which grammarians ſuppoſe to be, generally ſpeaking, applied to a perſon known *before*, and as then actually exiſtent: *Agnoſcimus*, *quos antea novimus*; *cognoſcimus*, *quos nunquam prius vidimus*.

§ 3. Another paſſage, to be urged in proof of the above point, is, our Saviour's ardent ejaculation to his Father, juſt before his paſſion, which we meet with in St. *John*, ch. xvii. ver. 5.

" And now, O Father, glorify me with thine " own glory, with the glory which I had with " thee before the world was." Which neceſſarily reſpects the *ſubordinate nature*, and *glory* of Chriſt, as his *ſupreme glorification* could never have departed from him.

§ 4. To which may be added the anſwer which the diſciples gave to our Saviour's demand of them, whom men ſaid that he was, *viz.* " Some " ſay, that thou art *John the Baptiſt*, ſome *Elias*, " or one of the prophets." A ſufficient demonſtration, that a deſcent of the human ſpecies upon earth, from a *prior ſtate*, was a prevailing opinion among the *Jews*; which our Saviour, inſtead of objecting to, ſeemed rather to acquieſce in, by only aſking them, in return to their information, " But whom ſay *ye* that I am?" And the ſame obſervation may likewiſe be made on that queſtion put to our Saviour, concerning the blind man; " Maſter, was it for this man's ſin, or his " parents, that he was born blind?" A queſtion upon which our Saviour did not take upon him at all to animadvert, or reprove, as undoubtedly he would have done, had it ſeemed to him to favour of an opinion wrong, and unwarrantable. Our

Saviour's anſwer is, " Neither hath this man " ſinned, nor his parents, but that the works of " God ſhould be made manifeſt in him." Which he ſaid (according to the opinion of ſome whom I eſteem the beſt commentators on the Scriptures extant) not ἁπλῶς ſimply, for ſo, both he and his parents had ſinned (as *Chryſoſtom* notes) but neither this man's ſins, nor his parents, were a cauſe why he, rather than all other ſinners, was born blind, but that God's glory might appear in his cure. See Aſſembly of Divines Annot. (printed 1622).

To the above I will add the following declaration of *Solomon*.

" Yea, rather being good," (comparatively ſo he means) " I came into a body undefiled." *Wiſdom*, ch. viii. ver. 20. Wherein he manifeſtly declares himſelf to have been a moral agent, in a ſtate prior to his abode here.

That theſe paſſages, if not poſitive declarations of, are, however, tranſient glances at the ſoul's pre-exiſtence, we ſhall be the more induced to believe, when we take into our conſideration the principal *end, and deſign of the Goſpel diſpenſation*, which has, as will be ſhewn hereafter, a manifeſt reference, and relation as well to a *prior*, as to a *future* ſtate. And as the doctrine of a *future* ſtate has experienced its alternate falls and recoveries, it is not to be wondered, if the ſame fate ſhould have happened likewiſe to the belief of a *prior* exiſtence.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Article of the Church of England, *concerning Original Sin, examined.*

§ 1. "ORIGINAL sin," says the ninth article of the church of *England*, "standeth not in the following of *Adam*, (as the "*Pelagians* do vainly boast) but it is the *nature* of "every man that is naturally engendered of the "offspring of *Adam*, whereby man is very far "gone from original righteousness, and is of his "own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh "lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and there-"fore in every person born into the world it de-"serves God's wrath, and damnation."

§ 2. From the first clause of which article there are two propositions plainly deducible; the former of which is *affirmative*, and the other *negative*.

First, it is therein positively implied (though not indeed actually, and in express terms declared) that there is a particular kind of sin chargeable upon mankind, which is peculiarly, and most properly termed *original*; but that,

Secondly, and negatively, the sin so called is not what the *Pelagians* pronounced it to be.

§ 3. Now, though with respect to the first proposition it must not be concealed, that the term *original*, as applied to *sin*, is no where to be met with in holy writ, yet have we, notwithstanding that, full, sufficient authority from thence, for imputing to the whole race of mankind, what may aptly enough be termed the guilt of *original sin*; of which persuasion was the church in the fifth century, though as to their ideas of the nature of it, and the circumstances wherein it consisted, she,

and a ſet of *Pelagians* widely differed, without being either of them, as it happened, in the right.

§ 4. The former reſolved it all into *Adam*'s fatal offence, the latter into ſuch kinds of treſpaſſes as were peculiarly mens own. The one ſuppoſed, that the ſin of *Adam* was of ſuch an univerſal and diffuſive efficacy, as to derive a guilt and ſtain to mankind in all ages of the world, and this on account of the relation which all men have to *Adam*, as their natural and moral principal, or head, from whom they *therefore* derived a general depravity of nature, and a mind prone to ſin and wickedneſs; the other urged, that *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion was a crime of a perſonal nature only, and not derivative of any the leaſt guilt to his deſcendants; that it was not productive of any of thoſe bad propenſions obſervable ſince in mankind, but that both he and they were *originally* created perfectly pure and innocent, though fallible and peccable at the ſame time; and that conſequently ſin took its origin from, and could only be imputable to every man's own perſonal acts and treſpaſſes *. Though of theſe two opinions on this point, the latter makes by much the neareſt approach to truth, the former admitting of no kind of defence from either reaſon or ſcripture, as will hereafter be fully ſhewn, yet does it not ſufficiently coincide with holy writ, which, whilſt it gives plain intimations of another kind of guilt imputable to mankind, than what ariſes merely from their own perſonal treſpaſſes here, is however repugnant altogether to

* Hæreſin illius (Pelagii) quod attinet ſumma huc fere redit. Peccatum originale funditus ſuſtulit, docens Adami peccatum ſoboli ejus non imputari, unumquemque e contra in eadem quâ Adam creatus eſt voluntate perfectione naſci. Vid. Cave. Script. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Liter. Vol. i. p. 382.

Pelagius's

Pelagius's conjecture, that *Adam* and his posterity came into this world perfectly pure and innocent.

We are, says the apostle, by nature the children of wrath, *&c.*

§ 5. Amidst this great opposition of opinions between the church and the *Pelagians*, concerning *original sin*, in which each of them ran wide of the mark, the compilers of our articles, by their openly condemning the one, and tacitly rejecting the other, seem to *me* to have had an eye to a *state pre-existent*, as the only hypothesis by means of which could fairly be removed every difficulty lying in the way of both. If that be not the case, it will be difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to explain that article in any rational or consistent sense at all.

§ 6. " Original sin, says the article, standeth " not in the following of *Adam* (as the *Pelagians* " do vainly talk) " *i. e.* It standeth not in sinning, like him, personally *here*, and against an express law of God. Well, but how then doth it stand? Standeth it in any crime relative or imputative? No. Standeth it in any guilt or stain in mankind, derived to them from *Adam*'s transgression, on account of the relation which all men bear to him, as their natural principal or head? No such thing. But it is----What? " Why it is the fault, or cor- " ruption of the nature of every man, that natu- " rally is engendered of the offspring of *Adam*, " whereby man is far gone from original righ- " teousness, and is of his own *nature* inclined to " evil."

§ 7. Now it will not consist with the reason and nature of things, or with our usual ideas of the amiable and all-perfect attributes of God, to imagine that the fault or corruption of the nature of every man is *therefore* sinful, so as to deserve *God's*

wrath, and damnation, because he is of the offspring of *Adam*. Nor ſhould we haſtily aſcribe to the compilers of our articles an opinion ſo horrid, not to ſay blaſphemous.

When they therefore ſay, that original ſin is a fault, or corruption of the nature of every man, that is naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam*, they can, I apprehend, mean nothing more or leſs than this, *viz.* That it is a fault or corruption interwoven in the *nature* of every offspring of *Adam*, whereby, or on account of which fault or corruption, man is far gone from original righteouſneſs (that righteouſneſs in which he was originally created) and is therefore of his *own* nature, not any kind of nature derived to him from *Adam*, of his *own* nature inclined to evil.

§ 8. Let us ſee then what, upon a further examination of this article, as above ſtated and explained, may be fairly deduced therefrom, relative to the doctrine of original ſin.

Firſt then, it tells us what it is not, and

Secondly, it informs us what in reality it is.

It is not what the *Pelagians* eſteemed it to be, whoſe opinion on that head we have before conſidered, and ſhall not need now to repeat, but it is----What? Why it is the guilt of a particular kind of ſin emphatically termed *original*, the nature of which we find expreſsly repreſented to us under the idea of a fault or corruption of the nature of every man naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam*, *&c.* But how the fault or corruption of every offspring of *Adam?* Are we by that to underſtand, that *Adam*'s ſin is tranſmitted to us by traduction? That cannot, with any ſhadow of reaſon, be ſuppoſed. Nothing but a man's own *perſonal* diſobedience can make him a ſinner in the ſight of *God*, or of *man*. He only that *ſins* can

be

be a ſinner*. No one can ſin by proxy, can ſin by virtue of any act of another perſon, to which he himſelf was not privy, or in any ſhape concerned. And it needs no proof ſurely, that we could be neither mediately, nor immediately, agents in the ſinful act of *Adam*, which was committed at a diſtance of more than 5000 years before we are ſuppoſed to have had a vital exiſtence.

§ 9. If however it be urged, that the article cannot mean, that we are *conſidered* as actual ſinners, but only that we are *treated as* ſuch in conſequence of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion; that not his *ſin*, but that *body* of ſin, which he contracted by ſin, is tranſmitted to us by traduction, on account of which we are made naturally ſubject to ſin, and of conſequenee equally expoſed with him to the guilt and puniſhment of it; what is this but a reflection

* "A repreſentative of a moral action, ſays doctor Taylor, is what I can by no means digeſt. A repreſentative, the guilt of whoſe conduct ſhall be imputed to us, and whoſe ſins ſhall corrupt and debauch our nature, is one of the greateſt abſurdities in all the ſyſtem of corrupt religion.—— That any man, without my knowledge or conſent, ſhould ſo repreſent me, that when he is guilty, I am to be reputed guilty; and when he tranſgreſſes, I ſhall be accountable and puniſhable for his tranſgreſſion, and thereby ſubjected to the wrath and curſe of God; nay further, that his wickedneſs ſhall give me a ſinful nature, and all this before I am born, and conſequently while I am in no capacity of knowing, helping, or hindering what he doth; ſurely any one, ſays that moſt ingenious and rational writer, who dares uſe his underſtanding, muſt clearly ſee this is unreaſonable, and altogether inconſiſtent with the truth and goodneſs of God." See Dr. Taylor's ſupplement to Scrip. Doct. of orig. ſin, p. 109.

"Nor does the apoſtle, in Rom. v. 12——20, as the ſame judicious writer had before obſerved, mention, or intimate, the conveyance of a ſinful nature, or any conſequence of Adam's offence, in which all mankind are concerned, beſides that death which all men die, when they leave this world." Vid. ibid. p. 107.

on

on the juſtice and wiſdom of God, as unworthy as the former?——Suppoſing us not accountable, I mean, for any *prior* ſin——there being no difference, that I can perceive, between making ſin itſelf neceſſary, hereditary, or eſſential to the ſoul, and the cloathing it with a body, that neceſſarily prompts, diſpoſes, or gives fuel to evil actions.

§ 10. When our article therefore ſays, that original ſin is the fault or corruption of the *nature* of every man that is naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam*, it can only in *reaſon* mean, that ſin is *born* with every ſuch offspring of *Adam*, and brought into the world with him from the very womb, not by any derived, imputed guilt of another *; but from ſome actual and inherent depravity in his own nature, and that too contracted, of courſe, in a prior ſtate; for the article, in expreſs terms, declares, that, on account of this *fault* or *corruption* of the nature of man, he is far gone from original righteouſneſs. But this original righteouſneſs, what can that be, but that in which man was originally created, and from which he had fallen in a prior ſtate? For is it poſſible a man can have *fallen from* that, to which he had not before *arrived?* And how is it that he had arrived to original righteouſneſs, but in a ſtate prior to *this*, into which ſcripture aſſures us he entered as a child of wrath, and on account of which our article informs us, he is far *gone from* original righteouſneſs?

* "It is not poſſible, ſays Mr. Brockleſby, that Adam, by his tranſgreſſion, ſhould merit for the ſouls of all his offspring their ſtate of blindneſs, pravity, ſpiritual death, to be deprived of the holy ſpirit and the divine image, with all the honours and felicities thereof, and to be ſubjected to eternal puniſhment in the world to come; for it never was, nor can be in any man's power to kill ſouls, ſays he, without their own conſent." Brockleſby, Goſpel Theiſm, p. 468.

teouſneſs

§ 11. If it be ſaid, that by original righteouſneſs we are to underſtand that ſtate of righteouſneſs only in which *Adam* was created, and from which man is far gone, *i. e.* widely differs from--*quam longiſſimè diſtat*--by means of a vitioſity of nature with which he comes into the world; I would ask, how we can make it reconcileable with reaſon to ſuppoſe, that God ſhould, in the exerciſe of his creative power and authority, indicate ſo cruel a partiality towards the deſcendants of *Adam*, as to force them into exiſtence with a leſs ſhare of infuſed righteouſneſs in *their* nature, than was vouchſafed to their *primogenitor?* Or that becauſe the one forfeited at length that integrity and uprightneſs of ſoul with which *he* was at firſt formed, his *offspring* ſhould be neceſſarily created in ſin? ſhould, at their ſuppoſed firſt entrance into life, be made ſlaves to impetuous paſſions and affections, which the former, being created in the image of God, (*Gen.* i. 27.) could, of courſe, only have contracted by a ſubſequent abuſe of his reaſon and underſtanding? This is a view of the divine Being and his providence, comprehenſive, may I not ſay, of abſolute blaſphemy?

§ 12. I cannot therefore ſee what elſe can be meant by the *original righteouſneſs* mentioned in the article under conſideration, than a ſuppoſed actual ſtate of righteouſneſs, in which the intellectual inhabitants of this world were originally created, and from which they had ſwerved in a prior ſtate. Whether that be the caſe or not, it muſt be left to the reader's judgment to determine. This, however, is clearly the ſenſe of the article, as to the *nature* of original ſin, or that wherein it conſiſts, *viz.* that it is the *fault* or *corruption* of the *nature* of every man that is *naturally* engendered of *Adam*.

§ 13. If then, as man comes *engendered* of *Adam* he comes *firſt formed* by the hands of his Creator,

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it follows that that Creator is the author of evil; from which horrid concluſion the hypotheſis of a *pre-exiſtent lapſe of ſouls* only can ſet us clear, as will hereafter appear.

CHAP. III.

A pre-exiſtent lapſe of human ſouls deduced from the infelicities and imperfections of man's preſent ſtate.

§ 1. THAT God is infinitely benevolent, as well as wiſe and powerful, we eſteem to be a truth as unqueſtionable as is his exiſtence; nor can I conceive it more natural and eſſential to the ſun to give warmth, than for the Deity, when calling creatures into a rational exiſtence, to impart to them inſtant happineſs. The very reverſe of which idea of the Creator is implied in the ſuppoſal that the preſent is the firſt ſtate of exiſtence in which we have made our appearance. We are born to troubles, as the ſparks fly upwards. We ſuck in miſery with our mother's milk, and the very firſt point of knowledge at which we are enabled to arrive, is to know what ſorrow meaneth. Thoſe piercing cries, with which the new-born babe ſalutes the opening world, how do they eccho forth an inward grief? How reluctantly does it meet its enlargement from the impriſoning womb, as if conſcious that it was a paſſage only to a place of puniſhment? How like an outcaſt of heaven afterwards is the helpleſs infant, "mewling and puking in his mother's "arms!" Its mental faculties, how inept are they, and inactive! Its organic powers, how inert and languid! Call you this an original, and the painter God? But where then the finiſhings worthy

worthy the hand of the divine maſter? Where thoſe exalted breathings of a freſh-formed ſoul, reaſon, reflection, active purity? Where the open, ever-ſmiling countenance and eyes, that beam forth the glowing happineſs within? Theſe, what but theſe can be the genuine lineaments of a true image of God? But can we find them, even in miniature, in infant man? Alas! no. Whence then ſo imperfect and unfiniſhed a piece? Is it not an original? And the artiſt, was it not God? Yes. But who does not ſee that it is an original tetribly damaged? Faded every beauty, every feature marred!

§ 2. If now, from this unpleaſing picture of man in his *infant* ſtate, we proceed to trace him through the other progreſſive ſtages of life, how unpleaſing and uncomfortable an appearance does he ſtill make? Youth has its thouſand croſſes and diſappointments. And the trifling pleaſures, which in that ſeaſon of giddineſs and folly, captivate and amuſe for a while, are more than overbalanced by the occurrence of ſome *ſhadowy* grievances and diſtreſſes, that ſit upon the mind with a weight equal to *ſubſtantial* ones. Inſtruction is a tax upon the youth's diverſions, not to be endured; and reſtraint of any kind, however ſeaſonable, is a ſeverity not to be borne; and till he can *ruin* himſelf in *his own way*, he is quite unhappy.

§ 3. View now this offſpring of providence ripened at length into man; and how does it fare with him then? Why then his former *follies* are exchanged for flagrant *vices*; and his *imaginary* troubles and misfortunes for ſuch as are *real*. And ſhould even prudence, piety, and virtue be the governing principles of his after-life, yet what precarious preſervatives are theſe againſt calamities! The good and bad, alas! ſhare them more

or

or less indiscriminately. Presuming therefore, that the Deity could not but communicate happiness to all his intellectual creatures, at the very instant that he conferred on them life, I infer from the above retrospect into man's state from his birth, that he must have experienced a vital existence *prior* to this *.

§ 4. If it be urged, that this supposed *first* will not be the *last* stage of man's existence, and that therefore it is easy to conceive how the defects, inconveniencies, disorders, and calamities, under which he now labours, will be removed in a *state to come*; and that if he is made miserable, as scripture informs us he is, through the default of *one*, he will be there sufficiently rewarded for that misery, by the all-sufficient merits of *another*; what is this but inverting the idea of divine Providence, and supposing God to *end* only with man in a manner with which we would rather expect he would begin, and as one who *delighteth* not more *in mercy*, than in his creatures misery?

§ 5. Can the God of infinite rectitude and goodness view, with an eye of *indignation*, creatures just starting into a rational existence, by the power of his almighty *fiat!*---And for no crime? No crime? Ay, for no crime. For can creatures, previously to the power of acting *at all*, commit

* If all is not deceit and illusion, it must be evident to a demonstration, that nothing unhappy in its order can come out of the hands of infinite goodness; and yet it is fact that all sentient and intelligent beings here are universally more or less miserable, and that there never was any human creature in his right senses, which, in a whole duration of human life, felt not, and thought not himself unhappy and miserable for some time, if not for the most part of his rational life, and wished not himself earnestly better, wiser, and more happy. Vid. Dr. Cheyne's Discourses, p. 30, 31.

crimes?

crimes? And to suffer for the offence of another is to suffer wrongfully. Such therefore cannot be the will of God towards man. If man then comes, which undoubtedly he does, as a *suffering* creature *here*, must he not have rendered himself *obnoxious* to such *sufferings* by some *prior trespasses?* This will be more fully considered hereafter.

CHAP. IV.

The depravity of the human mind considered, and shewn to be the effect of a pre-existent lapse.

§ 1. HOW great the depravity of human nature is, scripture, and the experience of past ages, as well as the present, abundantly evince.

§ 2. With respect to the former, take for the present the two or three following passages only; namely,

Who might offend, and hath not offended? Or done evil, and hath not done it?

O Jerusalem, says the prophet *Jeremiah, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved, how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?*

Again, says he, *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?*

The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are but vain, says the psalmist.

Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adultery, fornication, theft, &c. says our Saviour.

And again, *We are born in sin*, as says the apostle, *and are by nature the children of wrath.*

§ 3. If from scripture we turn to experience, what abundant evidence have we of the depravity of man's nature, from those strong propensions to evil

evil diſcoverable, more or leſs, in all of us, as ſoon after our firſt entrance into life as we are at all capable of acting in it. Man, froward man, longs to go aſtray, from his very cradle; and were his infant efforts not reſtrained by the occaſional reaſonings, rewards, or corrections of the watchful parent, what crimes would he not deviſe? What enormities would he not perpetrate? To what follies would he not become enſlaved? Inſomuch that *nature*, who ſhould ſeem firſt entitled to the guardianſhip of her own offspring, is the very laſt thought of, with whom to entruſt the important charge. A truth which every *ſyſtem of morality* ſuggeſts, and *education* implies. The end and deſign of each is not only to ſtrengthen, invigorate, and enrich a weak, languid, and barren *underſtanding*, but to correct and reform a vicious and corrupt *will*.

§ 4. The firſt dawnings of ſenſe and reflection in the infant's mind diſcover ſome upriſing paſſion or affection, ſome young diſeaſe, which, as the poet ſays,

> Grows with his growth, and ſtrengthens with his ſtrength;

is alike conſtitutional to the ſoul, as maladies of various kinds are to the body *. And as, from its natural or acquired temperature, the latter becomes more or leſs ſuſceptible of infection from a peſtilent air, or other noxious influences from without, ſo fares it evidently with the former. A kind of conſtitution there is in the *ſouls* of men,

* Nam vitiis nemo ſine naſcitur, optimus ille eſt
Qui minimis urgetur———
Hor. Sat. 3. lib. 1;

as well as in their bodies, which, though not equally bad in ſome as in others, is more or leſs diſeaſed in all. And in proportion to the difference obſervable in this conſtitutional frame of ſouls in different men, are they more or leſs affected by one and the ſame kind of objects, are excited to different ſorts of gratifications, and vary from each other as much in their paſſions as in their perſons, or choice of food *.

§ 4. So that whilſt certain objects work upon the fancy of ſome, with a force and energy too powerful for human means alone to repel, they operate feebly, or not at all, perhaps, on others. When attracted therefore by ſuch as are congruous to a *peculiar* turn of affection, a man commits crimes enormouſly deteſtable, the reflecting part of the world will not fail heartily to pity the offender, at the ſame time that they think it neceſſary to puniſh the offence, and will conſider it rather as a matter of *good fortune*, than any kind of *merit* in themſelves or others, that they ſtand exempt from tranſgreſſions for which they have no degree of reliſh; which take not their riſe from either bad precepts, or bad examples, but grow ſpontaneouſly, as it were, from nature. The former, *viz.* bad precepts and bad examples do indeed too frequently influence men to the practice of common crimes; evil counſel, adminiſtered with ſkill,

* ——————Quemvis mediâ erue turbâ
Aut ob avaritiam, aut miſerâ ambitione laborat:
Hic nuptarum inſanit amoribus; hic puerorum;
Hunc capit argenti ſplendor; ſtupet Albius ære;
Hic mutat merces ſurgente a ſole, ad eum quo
Veſpertina tepet regio; quin per mala præceps
Fertur, uti pulvis collectus turbine, ne quid
Summa deperdat metuens, aut ampliet ut rem.
Hor. Sat. 4. lib. 1.

may enſnare a weak aſſociate into theft, or fornication, or adultery. *When he ſeeth a thief he may conſent unto him, and be partaker with the adulterer*; and as *Shakeſpear* ſays,

" Who ſo firm that cannot be ſeduced *?"

But thoſe affections of the mind to which I here allude, and from which is proveable man's depravity of nature, are not capable of being inſtilled any more than they are of being diſpelled by advice, authority, or example; and theſe, together with thoſe *preternatural* propenſions above glanced at, are envy, malice, cruelty, revenge, covetouſneſs, and other more venial frailties. Where any of theſe take place, there nature herſelf gives the ſettlement †.

§ 5. And

* Julius Cæſar. Warburton, p. 16.—where the power of advice, however pernicious, is ſtrongly painted.

Well, Brutus, (ſays his fellow conſpirator Caſſius) [Brutus gone]

——— Thou art noble; yet I ſee
Thy honourable metal may be wrought upon
From what it is diſpoſed; therefore 'tis meet,
That noble minds keep ever with their likes;
For who ſo firm as cannot be ſeduced?

† The very ingenious Dr. Baker, in his treatiſe De Affectibus Animi, has a paſſage ſo effectually illuſtrative of my meaning, that I could not help giving it an Engliſh dreſs.

This paſſion, ſays he, (ſpeaking of envy) is the moſt troubleſome inmate of the human heart; it is an inteſtine plague, diffuſing its poiſonous influence through the whole maſs of blood and juices,

Sucks up the marrow from the ſolid bone,
Nor leaves within the limbs one drop of blood.

And, ſtrange as it may appear, yet is it, notwithſtanding, true, from known facts, that ſymptoms of envy appear in the

§ 5. And what character is there in public life, or among those in a lower sphere of action, either *amiable* or *great*, that is not sullied by an unlucky intermixture of one or other of nature's foibles, if not flagrant vices. To select a couple of characters in common life only, in order to avoid invidious and unwilling reflections on the eminent of the past or present times.

§ 6. *Agriophilus* and *Philanthropus* are men whose lives form an entire contrast. In the one you have what is completely odious and detestable, in the general estimation of the world; in the other the truly amiable and engaging. And yet it is remarkable, that in that particular course of behaviour, wherein *Philanthropus* differs most from the temper and conduct of *Agriophilus*, he is most reprehensible.

the infant state of man from his very cradle.—Insomuch that it is not unusual to see a babe pining and languishing in a most wretched manner with this passion, as with a consumptive malady. Nor is it capable of being freed from the overpowering disorder by any medical art or assistance whatever, but by either a total removal, or a pretended slight of the infant rival.

Hæc est hospes (nempe invidia) humani pectoris molestissima; hæc intestina pestis, quæ sanguine, humoribusque nostris malum suum immiscet virus; quæ

Intactis vorat ossibus medullas,
Et totum bibit artubus cruorem.

Etiam in tenellâ hominis ætate, ipsisque ab incunabulis (mirum est quod dicturus sum, at experientiâ satis pervulgatum) produnt se haud obscura quædam zelotypiæ signa; ita ut infantulum videat liceat ex hoc affectu tabe miserrimè extenuari, ac langueſcere; non nisi rivali infantulo aut amoto oculis, aut magis de industriâ neglecto, arte ullâ, aut auxilio medicorum a gravi morbo liberandum. Vid. D. Baker de Affect. Anim. &c. p. 23, 24.

Agriophilus is moroſe, covetous, cruel, and revengeful; *Philanthropus* quite the reverſe; he is affable, generous, tender-hearted, compaſſionate. But how does it grieve one to ſee theſe, and many other ſhining virtues obſcured at once by one ſingle foible of nature,—indiſcretion? A frailty, which accompanied him from his earlieſt life. *Agriophilus* is *covetous*, *Philanthropus* is *extravagant*. *Agriophilus* hides himſelf from the world, as loving no part of it but that from which he can make a thirty, forty, or an hundred *per cent.* advantage. *Philanthropus*, on the contrary, holding ſuch a mean, low-ſpirited mind in the utmoſt contempt, runs into a culpable negligence in his affairs, and a too exceſſive fondneſs for friendſhips, popularity, and vain applauſe. But is it not wonderful, that two ſuch contraſted diſpoſitions ſhould exiſt in men whoſe ſituation and circumſtances in life give them opportunities of acting entirely the ſame part in it? *Agriophilus* has as much money to ſquander away as *Philanthropus* ever poſſeſſed; but he would not, if he could help it, part with a ſhilling; and *Philanthropus* could have availed himſelf of as many powerful pleas for œconomy and frugality as *Agriophilus*, and would, had he ever been directed by *prudence*. But how ſhall we account for a *diſſonancy* of principles and propenſions in theſe two; a diſſonancy as great as if it exiſted in beings of a different ſpecies? Is it reſolvable all into the force of example, advice, or ſollicitation? Certainly no. For the one is as univerſally deſpiſed for his inſenſibility and brutality, and he knows it, as the other is condemned for his gaiety and indiſcretion. To what, in ſhort, but a diſſimilarity of *taſte* alone can we aſcribe the extraordinary difference? Taſte, which makes as well

well the *moral man*, as the *muſician*, *painter*, or *poet*. It is taſte, the ſoul's conſtitutional frame I mean, that makes the man; nor can you with leſs difficulty whip one lad at ſchool into a nice and exquiſite reliſh for muſick, painting, poetry, or other arts, than give another, by the uſe of the beſt methods you can deviſe, a nice and delicate turn for honour, integrity, and public ſpirit. And it is notorious what very different effects ariſe frequently from the ſame courſe of diſcipline, in general, the ſame ſalutary precepts, patterns, and examples, in two or more youths, the offspring of the ſame parents. How amazingly different very oft are their tempers, genius, paſſions, inclinations, purſuits *?

§ 7. And yet I would not be thought to aſſert, that that which we here call taſte, that predominant, conſtitutional *turn* of mind, with which each man comes into the world irreſiſtibly, and by a kind of fatality, determines him to his peculiar purſuits. For, generally ſpeaking, its influence either leſſens, or is encreaſed, in proportion to the encouragement or checks it may occaſionally meet with, in the courſe of a well or ill-conducted education. The former will do wonders in breaking

* " Cur alter fratrum ceſſare, et ludere, et ungi,
" Præferat Herodis palmetis pinguibus; alter
" Sylveſtrem flammis, et ferro mitiget agrum:
" Scit genius, natale comes, qui temperat aſtrum,
" Naturæ deus humanæ."———

By the term Genius Horace means the natural turn and diſpoſition or ſpirit of a man, and it is called the Deus humanæ naturæ, as being that which gives life and activity to the whole intellectual frame.

" Le genie, ſays madam Dacier, qui préſide à la naiſſance
" de tous les hommes, et qui etant different, fit la difference
" des inclinations, et des temperans. Ce genie n'eſt autre
" choſe, que leur eſprit." Dacier in loco.

or weakening the force of many paſſions, which too uſually ſpring up in the juvenile mind, with double force, by means of the latter; and yet that there are ſome which by the uſe of meer natural powers are irremoveable, no one will deny, who conſiders in the leaſt what human nature in general *is*, and always *has been**.

§ 8. Nor

* It is inconceivable, ſays a French writer, that the curious obſervers of nature, men who bend their utmoſt application upon ſtudying and knowing themſelves, ſhould not have obſerved, that man is not governed and conducted by reaſon—that reaſon, with all its power and induſtry, cannot deſtroy any one paſſion that is rooted in the heart of man, neither by the help of age nor by the influence of example, nor by the fear of evil. Vid. l'Eſprit's preface to his Deceit of human virtues.

And ſays Seneca: " Nullâ ſapientiâ naturalia corporis, aut " animi, vitia ponuntur, quicquid ingenitum eſt lenitur arte, " non vincitur." Senec. Epiſt.

" It is more eaſy, ſays an old poet, to give life and educa- " cation to a man, than to impart to him a rightly-diſpoſed " mind; to which not one has attended, as yet, who has aimed " to make a wiſe man of a fool, or a good man out of a bad " one. If the deity had given to the Æſculapian tribe the art " of correcting and removing the peccant and malignant hu- " mours of the mind, many and great would have been their " fees. But if the νοημα of a man—his leading principle was " any thing capable of being framed or implanted, that never " would have proved in the end a bad man, who had liſtened " to the wholſome preſcripts of a good father. But be your " precepts what they may, it will never be in your power to " make of a bad man a good one."

Φῦσαι κ᾽ ἀρεῖναι ῥᾴδιον βροτὸν ἢ φρένας ἐσθλὰς·
ἀνθέμεν. οὐδεὶς πω τοῦτό γ᾽ ἐπιφράσατο,
ὅσις σώφρων ἔσκε τὸν ἄφρονα, κ᾽ κακὸν ἐσθλόν.
εἰ δ᾽ Ἀσκληπιάδαις τοῦτο ἔδωκε θεὸς,
ἴασθαι κακότητα, κ᾽ ἀτηρὰς φρένας ἀνδρῶν,
πολλοὺς ἂν μισθοὺς, κ᾽ μεγάλως ἔφερον.
εἰ δ᾽ ἦν ποιητὸν τε κ᾽ ἐνθετον ἀνδρὶ νόημα,
ἔκποτ᾽ ἂν ἐξ ἀγαθοῦ παιδὸς ἐγεντο κακὸς
πειθόμενος μύθοισι σαώφροσιν· ἀλλὰ διδάσκων
αἰὲν ἀποτρωπῆσαι τὸν κακὸν οὐκ ἀγαθόν.

Theog. γνωμ. l. 429.

§ 8. Nor would the argument for the soul's depravity be at all weakened, should it be insisted

 on,

This passage, which I have taken upon me to translate, the reader is desired to attend to with proper caution, and not to forget that it comes from the pen of an heathen moralist, unacquainted, of course, with those all-sufficient resources for the suppression of those bad passions, to which Christians are directed, and from which they may, if they are not wanting to themselves, reap the desired advantage. And it is introduced here in proof, or illustration of this one obvious truth only, that man comes into the world naturally bad.

I would not however be understood to mean, from what has here been advanced, that no one either does, or ever did come into this world altogether uninfected with vicious principles and propensions; the reverse having been evidently the case, as may be abundantly proved as well from history, sacred and profane, as also from even the present times; but only that, generally speaking, man has at the best, and under the advantages of education, interwoven with his virtues so many natural frailties, imperfections, not to say immoralities, that reason will not allow us to imagine, that a soul could come so imperfectly and immorally constructed immediately from the hands of its maker, and that therefore we must look further back for the origin of man, than to his formation in the womb. As to the exalted examples of piety and virtue, recorded either in sacred history or profane, or of what even the present times may be thought to boast, these, when compared with the bulk of mankind in general, not to mention the more than ordinary powers, with which most, if not all of the former, came furnished, that they might become exemplary patterns of purity and holiness to a wicked and degenerate world (*a*), these, I say, are instances so seemingly singular and extraordinary, as do not in the least disprove, what is all that I would be meant to assert, that the untutored and undisciplined mind of man is, in general, not only averse to that which is good, but prone, in reality, to practices absolutely bad, such as are a disgrace to the honour and dignity of intelligent and rational beings.

(*a*) The patriarchs, says Eusebius, were adorned with a life that is according to nature, (to original nature) by right reasonings they were adorned with the virtue of religion; by natural reasonings and unwritten laws, steering the right course of virtue, they passed beyond fleshly pleasures into an every-way wise

on, or could it be even proved that her vices or frailties are propagated among men, by either the influence of bad example, or by an incogitant neglect, or groſs perverſion of right reaſon; ſince, in the firſt place, bad examples preſuppoſe a vitioſity of mind in thoſe who at firſt ſet the examples; and from the reſiſtance and oppoſition, which in various inſtances they are found to meet with in ſome, it may reaſonably be preſumed, that they never prevail at all, but where there is a correſpondent aptitude of mind for receiving the deſtructive impreſſion*; and then ſecondly, the enquiry here is not by what means we may cure, check the progreſs, or avoid the infection of thoſe diſorders and diſeaſes of the ſoul, which ſink it ſo far below the rank and dignity of intellectual and rational beings; but how to trace them to their fountain-head. It cannot be ſuppoſed, that the Deity himſelf infuſed them; nor can we, with any degree of propriety, aſcribe them, as will, in the next chapter, be ſhewn, to any obliquity of nature derived from *Adam*,—derived, I mean, from the nature of that body which we do in reality inherit

wiſe and religious life. Beſides which, he ſays, that they had extraordinary appearances of God, and converſe with him; were Φίλοι Θεοῦ καὶ Προφῆται, "the friends of God and prophets." Euſeb. Prep. Evan. lib. vii. cap. 5, 7. They are therefore, as ſays Brockleſby, not to be looked upon merely as holy men, but as ſome extraordinary miniſters of religion. Brock. 731.

* When we ſay men are miſled by external circumſtances of temptation, it cannot but be underſtood that there is ſomewhat within themſelves, to render thoſe circumſtances temptations, or to render them ſuſceptible of impreſſions from them; ſo when we ſay, they are miſled by paſſions, it is always ſuppoſed, that there are occaſions, circumſtances, and objects exciting thoſe paſſions, and affording means for gratifying them. Vid. Butler's Anal. p. 107.

from

from him. And yet such has been, and is still too much the prevailing opinion among men, owing to their not forming to themselves clear conceptions of that *duplex* composition of which scripture and experience prove us to consist, *viz.* the *carnal* man and *spiritual*. Some indeed have been wise enough to ascribe to man a *triple* soul, the vegetative, animal, and rational *; imagining, that among so many different species of souls, it was a chance but that there might be one, upon which they could, with propriety, fix the rise and propagation of bad passions. In answer to this, it may, with great confidence, I think, be affirmed, that the belief of a double or triple soul in man is absurd to the last degree; that only *one* and the *same* soul actuates and animates that duplex, that spiritual and animal nature, of which we now consist; and that, from its acting under two separate and distinct relations, there arises the exertion of two sorts of propensions or desires, in their nature essentially different: these *Malebranche* chuses to distinguish by the terms *passions* and *natural inclinations*; I would rather call them our *passions* and our *natural affections*. The former are the result and consequence of the soul's relation to, and union with the body; the latter the essential workings of its own free and independent self. The one are, the cravings, as it were, of the soul, to which the nature and constitution of the body make her subject, which are necessary for her support and nourishment, and which we have

* Allusive to which absurdity, says Ben Johnson in his Poetaster: "What, shall I turn shark upon my friends, or my "friends' friends? I scorn it with my three souls."
Vid. Warburton, in Shakespear's Twelfth Night, p. 144.

in

in common with brutes*, *viz.* hunger, thirſt, concupiſcence, ſelf-affection, *&c.* and theſe we may term her *paſſions*, in contradiſtinction to thoſe intellectual and independent motions, which are eſſential to, or however ariſe from her ſpiritual frame, and which may therefore be moſt properly ſtiled the ſoul's affections. The firſt are what the apoſtle means by that *Law in his members warring againſt the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of ſin*,—that *carnal mind*, which is *enmity againſt God*,—whence proceed what he ſtiles the *luſts of the fleſh*, *viz.* adultery, fornication, *&c.* the latter are what the ſame apoſtle terms the *fruits of the ſpirit*, *viz.* love, joy, peace, gentleneſs, meek-

* Agreeably to which the generality of philoſophers, ſays the learned Mr. Brockleſby, diſtinguiſh two parts in the ſoul of man, the inferior and ſuperior. The one is common to the brutes, and falleth within the comprehenſion of ſenſitive nature, which they call παθητικον (the ſeat of the bodily appetites, affections, and paſſions) the other is τὸ λόγικον, the rational nature; and between theſe two, as contrary operative principles, there is uſually a conflict and combat. Δύο γὰρ ἐστι μαχόμενα φύσις εἰς ἐν κεκραμένη, for two natures, conflicting one with the other, are conjoined, the ſenſitive (the appetites to ſenſitive good) reſiſting, and withſtanding the rational nature, diſcerning and dictating the good of honeſty. In this conflict the ſenſitive nature uſually prevails by its deceit and impetuous violence, not only againſt mens reſolutions to the contrary in their ſober mood, but againſt the preſent light and dictates of their minds, ἐκ βιας ἐπιθυμιαν δι προσδοσαι, ἄγεσι, κ ἕλκεσι, by the force of their deſires, which carry and drag them.

The mind is tyrannically lorded over by brutal affections, which are uſually in motion and commotion, the irrational paſſions poſſeſſing it, and diſtracting it, and in ſome ſort compelling it to do the things that are deſirable to them. For every paſſion has a compulſory force in it; it dethrones or expels reaſonings. See Brockleſby's Goſpel-Theiſm, p. 708.

With regard to this author, if the reader ſhall at any time obſerve in him a kind of uncouth, inelegant phraſeology, he will find it nevertheleſs expreſſive of very clear, cloſe, comprehenſive reaſoning.

neſs

neſs, &c. When we are enquiring therefore into the riſe and progreſs of the various vices and frailties of mankind, we ſhould carefully diſtinguiſh between ſuch propenſions as are in reality their *fault*, and thoſe which are only their *misfortune*. The ſoul's paſſions, thoſe to which ſhe is made ſubject by her alliance with the body, are neceſſary for the ſupport and continuance of that union and connection, and are conſequently only ſinful when gratified beyond the bounds and reſtrictions which reaſon, religion, and the laws of ſociety preſcribe. Theſe we derive neceſſarily from the nature and conſtitution of that body we inherit from *Adam*. And theſe are, properly ſpeaking, not the ſoul's faults, but her misfortunes; as being of a carnal, ſenſual nature only; nor are theſe the affections of the mind to which I allude, and from which is proveable the depravity of nature; which conſiſts, and only conſiſts of irregularities, inconſiſtencies, and actual blemiſhes in her intellectual frame; ſuch as are envy, malice, revenge, cruelty, &c. And when the apoſtle ranks even theſe in his catalogue of the *works of the fleſh*, we are not to conſider him as pronouncing them the genuine, neceſſary effects and productions of the fleſh, but as principles which are moſt uſually diſcernible in, and leſs reſtrained by thoſe, whoſe deſires terminate more on the gratification of ſenſual appetites and paſſions, than in correcting and reforming the degeneracy of their ſpiritual and more natural affections.

§ 9. We ſee then how frail, imperfect, and depraved a being the ſoul is in its natural ſtate. And, in order to aſcertain the real *cauſe* of this depravity, reaſon and philoſophy oblige us to conclude, either that it ariſes from the accidental ſtate and condition of that body we inherit from *Adam*, by its Creator — or

that it
or was implanted by its Creator, or is the effect of a pre-exiſtent lapſe.

That the firſt cannot be the caſe, even this ſingle conſideration evinces, *viz.* that we are not univerſally affected by that body in a ſimilar manner. Men differ from each other as much in their affections as in their faces. And if to this it be replied, that that may be owing to ſome different texture and modification of one and the ſame ſpecies of matter, I would aſk, how it comes to paſs that ſuch a great contrariety of tempers ſhould be ſo frequently met with in perſons of the very ſame kind of complexion, and ſeemingly ſimilar texture of body*?

The external form and figure indeed is that by which your phyſiognomiſts aim to read the internal man †, yet experience ſhews, that that is not an index which invariably and infallibly points true.

§ 10. Nor is there the leaſt reaſon in nature to expect that it ſhould. It is not poſſible that purely paſſive *matter* ſhould impart principles not its own, or, in other words, the active properties and eſſentials of *ſpirit*. So that it is of courſe not poſſible, that the ſoul can receive either her *good* or *bad intellectual qualities* from this or that frame or temperature of the body. We may as well ſuppoſe the very conſtruction of the ſoul to be material, as make it dependent on matter for its properties.

* The reader is to take notice, that I am now ſpeaking of the real affections of the mind, not the ſenſual paſſions, that ariſe from the ſoul's connection with the body.

† Δίνος ἄπ' ὀφθαλμὲ ϗ τὸ νοημα μαθειν.

Theoc.

And the wiſe ſon of Sirach ſays, "A man may be known "by his looks." Eccluſ. xix. 29.

§ 11. The

§ 11. The ſoul's native powers indeed are ſo far dependent on the nature and quality of that heterogeneous vehicle wherein it is contained, and from which it is furniſhed with all its proper inſtruments of ſenſe and reflection, as to be enabled to operate to only that confined degree of excellence and perfection, to which the properties of that vehicle are ſuited. Hence it is that we are enabled to account, in a great degree, for that ſeeming ſubordination of intellectual abilities, obſervable now in the ſeveral ſpecies of animated and intelligent natures. Hence it is that brute creatures are become inferior to us in the uſe of their reaſoning faculties, as we are perhaps to angels. Brutes can reaſon and reflect only in part, and how inconſiderable and contracted is the utmoſt range of *human* reaſoning, when compared with the intellectual powers of the *angelic* hoſt! Had the ſouls of brutes been lodged in the ſame kind of vehicle with our own, it is probable that they would have attained to as high a degree of rationality in this their ſublunary ſphere of action, as we have done; and that we ſhould ourſelves have fallen to as low a ſtate of ſenſibility and reflection as they are reduced to, had we been thrown into a body entirely organized, as is theirs *.

§ 12. As

* Moſt of the ancient philoſophers taught, that the ſouls of beaſts were rational; from whence it follows, that they believed thoſe ſouls to differ in degrees of rationality only from thoſe of men. Anaxagoras placed that difference in this particular, viz. "That men are capable of explaining their reaſonings, whereas beaſts are not able to explain theirs." Vid. Plutarch. de Placit. Philoſ. lib. v. cap. 20. p. 908.

Pythagoras and Plato had the ſame thoughts on this point. They ſaid, that the ſouls of beaſts, though truly rational, act not according to reaſon, becauſe they want the uſe of ſpeech, and

§ 12. As the inherent depravity of the ſoul therefore evidently proceeds not from the conſtitutional qualities

and their organs are not well-proportioned,—That the mere diſpoſition of the organs hindered reaſon from appearing in beaſts, as it appears in men. See Bayle's life of Pereira.

Agreeably to which, ſays Virgil,

Igneus eſt ollis vigor, et cœleſtis origo
Seminibus: quantum non noxia corpora tardant,
Terrenique hebetant artus, moribundaque membra.

And that the ſouls of men and beaſts are, in their nature, intrinſically the ſame, we ſeem authoriſed to conclude, from what the ſacred preacher ſays upon the point.

" I ſaid in mine heart, concerning the eſtate of the ſons of " men, that God might manifeſt, or (as agreeably to the origi- " nal it ſhould be rendered) God will make manifeſt, that they " are beaſts. For that which befalleth the ſons of men be- " falleth beaſts, even one thing befalleth them: as one dieth, " ſo dieth the other, yea they have all one breath, ſo that a " man hath no pre-eminence over a beaſt. All go unto one " place, all are of duſt, and all turn to duſt again." Eccleſ. iii. 19, 20.

Diogenes ſaid, that beaſts are made up of a body and a ſoul, and that if their ſoul does not actually feel and reaſon, it is becauſe the thickneſs of its organs, and the great quantity of humours, reduce it to the condition of mad men. See Plut. de Plac. Philoſoph.

Nor can we ſee an equality of providence towards the brute creation, without ſuppoſing them poſſeſſed of ſouls capable of being recompenſed in an hereafter, and deſigned ſo to be, for the toils and miſeries they undergo here.

Appoſite to this reflection is the following extract from the ingenious author of Reflections on the Œconomy of Nature in Animal Life.

It is certain, ſays he, that the ſelf-motive and ſelf-active principle, or ſpiritual ſubſtance, that actuates or animates organiſed matter, muſt have, eſſentially and actually, inherent in it all thoſe natural qualities, faculties, and endowments, in the higheſt perfection, that it ever exerts or attains to in any time of its duration. To augment or encreaſe in eſſential qualities is an abſurdity, and to augment or encreaſe naturally is only the property of body and matter; but ſpiritual ſubſtance being indiviſible and immortal, if it could admit of more or leſs, in natural

qualities of that body it is made to inhabit here, ſo neither is it,

Secondly, to be conſidered as implanted by him that formed it.

§ 13. It is impoſſible that the Deity can be the parent of imperfection. By which I do not mean to aſſert, that God cannot produce any thing ſhort of, or inferior to perfection itſelf. For then *finite* beings could not be the offspring of an *infinite* one, nor an effect be unequal to the cauſe from whence it proceeded. But this I do venture to aſſert, that nothing imperfect in *its kind* can come out as ſuch immediately from the hands of God. And yet however true and unqueſtionable ſuch a poſition is, the reverſe would evidently be the caſe, if man in his ſtate of *nature*, is as he came *firſt* from the hands of God; for then every intellectual de-

natural or eſſential qualities, it might ceaſe to be; I mean as to its natural qualities of living, perceiving, and willing, *i. e.* of cogitation or thinking; for as to its moral qualities of juſtice, goodneſs, and truth, they may encreaſe or decreaſe to any degree, ſince they entirely depend on the free will; and therefore the natural faculties of living, perceiving, and willing; and thus ſeveral degrees and modifications of activity, ſagacity, and deſire, are eſſentially and uniformly permanent in it in their order and degree, whatever kind of body it animates; and when it does not exert theſe innate and eſſential qualities, it is becauſe it is limited and reſtrained by the nature of groſs matter, and the laws of the body which it animates, which is a foreign impediment, inſuperable to its degree of ſelf-activity and ſelf-mobility. For an angel is as truly an angel, as to its ſpiritual nature and faculties, informing the body of a ſerpent, or any other organized body, as informing the body of a man. And an angel, animating an human body, would be only a more perfect man, and, by its natural and eſſential qualities could then only more perfectly exert human functions and operations. An unorganized body could produce no vital functions; it could only put it into particular motions. Vid. Cheyne, Nat. Method of curing diſeaſes of the body and mind, p. 1, 2, 3.

formity

formity and irregularity is a blemiſh in the creature, chargeable wholly and ſolely upon God its Creator. Then the envious, the malicious, the cruel and revengeful, are not more excentric from the laws of virtue and purity, or, in other words, not worſe than they ſhould or could be; and the thing formed may ſay unto him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus?

§ 14. Moſt writers on the ſubject of the human paſſions aſſert indeed, what may be judged perhaps a ſufficient anſwer to the above remark, that moſt, if not all of thoſe paſſions, which men uſually deem bad, are, in various inſtances, *conſequentially* good, and of courſe not to be looked upon as blemiſhes and imperfections in our nature. That *ambition*, for example, is productive of deeds that ſerve, in many reſpects, to aggrandize the prince and his people; introduces into a public ſphere of action, men beſt qualified to advance the honour, reputation, and intereſts of their king and country; and tranſmits to poſterity many illuſtrious examples of magnanimity and undaunted bravery. That the paſſion of *pride* ſwells the mind to a reſiſtance of mean, ſelfiſh, abject conſiderations, or any diſhonourable or unjuſt attacks. That even *envy* has apparently its advantages, inaſmuch as it ſpurs a man on to a rivalſhip of another in his virtues and noble exploits. That *covetouſneſs* ſerves to create an abundance, which the heir, actuated by a different kind of ſpirit from the firſt poſſeſſor, is enabled to diffuſe in various acts of generoſity, and a well-placed beneficence. This is the light in which, as far as I can recollect, writers on this ſubject, place, for the moſt part, theſe and other paſſions of the human breaſt, in order to ſhew, that they are not, what I eſteem them to be, real blemiſhes. But if reaſon may be allowed to be a

proper

proper judge in this caſe, I would aſk, whether this is not abſolutely confounding the eſſential difference between good and evil, judging of the *nature* of our paſſions from their *accidental effects* and *conſequences*, and blending the *eſſence* of things with their *ends* and *uſes?* For ſuppoſing, though not granting, the accidental *effects* iſſuing from thoſe above-mentioned paſſions, to be a proper criterion whereby to aſcertain their expediency and real value, we ſhall even then, I think, find ſufficient reaſon to pronounce them, in general, *bad*. They are as frequently *miſchievous* in their effects, as *beneficial*, and perhaps more ſo. It was *ambition*, you'll ſay, that made *Alexander* ſhine with ſuch *eclat* in the annals of fame, and I'll grant it; but did it not give to the world at the ſame time, and in the ſame perſon, a madman, and a murderer of millions? It was to the monarch's *pride* that *Babylon* owed her magnificent temples, and her other ſumptuous buildings; that were the glory and wonder of the age in which he lived; but did not that ſame intoxicating paſſion ſink at laſt the renowned lord thereof into the ſimilitude of a creature inferior to the loweſt of the human ſpecies?

With reſpect to *envy*——

——————Say firſt what cauſe
Mov'd our grand parents in that happy ſtate,
Favour'd of Heaven ſo highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and tranſgreſs his will
For one reſtraint—lords of the world beſides?
Who firſt ſeduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent, he it was, whoſe guile,
Stirr'd up with *envy* and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind.——

As for *covetouſneſs*, if that be, either in principle or in practice, a *virtue*, then with regard to all *vices* whatever, *the greateſt of them is Charity*.

§ 15. In ſhort, it will not be denied, but that, in the general courſe of God's providence, *good* will frequently ariſe out of *evil*. But then it ought to be conſidered, that the good accidentally iſſuing therefrom does not alter its ſpecific nature and quality. And as there are paſſions which, without any kind of diſpute, are intrinſically *good*, the reverſe of thoſe paſſions muſt of courſe be intrinſically *bad*, be they in their conſequences *accidentally* this or that; elſe adieu to all diſtinctions between *good* and *evil*, between virtue and vice, between the righteous and the wicked! As therefore among the various affections incident to the human kind, there are ſome which muſt undoubtedly be denominated *bad*, thoſe are a blemiſh in the *creature* chargeable wholly and ſolely on the *Creator*, if the former had not an *exiſtence prior* to its appearance here.

§ 16. It is urged indeed by a very lively and ſprightly writer, " That in the ſcale of beings " there muſt be ſomewhere ſuch a creature as " man, with all his infirmities about him,—that a " removal of theſe would be altering his very na- " ture, and that as ſoon as he became perfect, he " *muſt ceaſe to be man.*†"

The removal of man's infirmities would be altering undoubtedly the very nature of man; but is the inference from thence juſt, that man comes into the world with all his imperfections about him, " *becauſe* there muſt be ſomewhere in the

† See Nat. and Origin. of Evil, p. 98.

" ſcale

" ſcale of beings a creature ſo unfortunately and " *immorally* formed ?"

§ 17. To ſuppoſe God neceſſitated to call in to his aid *evil*, for the better carrying on his moral government of the world, is methinks an idea of Providence not ſhort of mental blaſphemy. If the ingenious author had ſaid, that moral evil will, in the *final iſſue* of things, be productive of a far ſuperior degree of moral good, it would have been judged by the generality of his readers, I imagine, a ſufficient apology for the introduction of moral *evil* into the world. In ſhort, man, and man only, brought evil into the world, by his having before (in a prior ſtate) brought evil upon himſelf. A truth which will, I doubt not, appear in the ſequel very evident to every free and impartial reader.

Having ſhewn, then, that the depravity of the human mind is not occaſioned either by the groſs ſtate and condition of that body in which the ſoul is now lodged, or implanted by him that formed it, it would be an affront to common ſenſe, and to the reader's judgment, to doubt his *granting* me the *concluſion*, that it can be none elſe than the effect of a pre-exiſtent lapſe; eſpecially if to what has already been obſerved, he adds an impartial attention to the enſuing chapters.

CHAP. V.

A pre-existent lapse of human souls the belief of the most learned and ingenious among the ancient philosophers, the Greek *and* Latin *fathers, and of some very eminent writers of a more modern date.*

§ 1. WITH respect to the former of these, I must beg the reader to be satisfied at present with the following quotation from the great Dr. *More*, which we have also in *Glanville*'s *Lux Orientalis*.

" Let us cast our eyes, says Dr. *More*, into " what corner of the world we will, that has been " famous for wisdom and literature, and the " wisest of all nations you will find the assertors " of the soul's pre-existence.

" In *Ægypt*, that ancient nursery of all hidden " sciences, that this opinion was in vogue among " the wisest men there, those fragments of *Trismegist*'s do sufficiently witness: of which opinion " not only the *Gymnosophists*, and other wise men " of *Ægypt* were, but also the *Brachmans* of *India*, " the *Magi* of *Babylon* and *Persia*: to which may " be added the abstruse philosophy of the *Jews*, " which they call the *Cabbala* of the soul's pre-" existence, makes a considerable part, as also the " learned of the *Jews* do confess. And, says he, if " we can believe the *Cabbala* of the *Jews*, we must " assign it to *Moses*; to whom you may add *Zoroaster*, *Pythagoras*, *Epicharmus*, *Empedocles*, *Cebes*, " *Euripides*, *Plato*, *Euclid*, *Philo*, *Virgil*, *Marcus Cicero*, *Plotinus*, *Jamblicus*, *Proclus*, *Boethius*, *Psellus*, and several others. And if, says he, we

" were

" were to add *fathers* to *philoſophers*, we might " enter into the ſame liſt *Syneſius* and *Origen*; the " latter of whom was ſurely the greateſt light and " bulwark that ancient chriſtianity ever had; " who, unleſs there had been ſome very great " matter in it, was far from that levity and vanity " as to entertain an opinion ſo vulgarly ſlighted " and neglected by other men; and the ſame " may be ſaid of others, that were Chriſtians, as " *Boethias*, *Pſellus*, and the late learned *Marſilius* " *Ficinus*; to which he adds *Hippocrates* and *Ga-* " *len*. *Cardan* alſo, that famous philoſopher of " his age, expreſsly concludes, that the rational " ſoul is a diſtinct being from the ſoul of the " world, and that it does pre-exiſt before it comes " into the body." To theſe he likewiſe adds *Pomponatius* and *Ariſtotle*, and concludes the catalogue by obſerving, " That from thence pre-ex- " iſtence appears not only to be the moſt rational " hypotheſis that can be maintained, but to have " had the ſuffrage of the moſt renowned philoſo- " phers in all ages of the world."

§ 2. Quotations from each author could not be brought within the limits preſcribed to this *firſt* part of an introduction to a larger work; the reader will, therefore, I hope be ſatisfied with knowing where to have recourſe for further information, when he chuſes it. If now we deſcend to writers of a more modern date, we ſhall find ſeveral of the moſt learned and ingenious among them expreſsly aſſerting the ſame opinion. Of theſe the principal are, that divine philoſopher and ſcholar Dr. *Henry More*, quoted in the preceding ſection; his ingenious and learned diſciple Mr. *Glanville*; the very ſenſible and acute Dr. *Cheyne*, who has ſome ſtriking obſervations on the ſubject, and that

very eminent and ſpeculative prelate the late biſhop of *Durham*; from whom be pleaſed to take the following remarks.

" There are, ſays he, natural appearances of " our being in a ſtate of degradation †."

And again, p. 297, 298. " Whoever will conſider the manifold miſeries, and even extreme " wickedneſs of the world, that the beſt have " great wrongneſſes within themſelves, which " they complain of, and endeavour to amend, " but that the generality grow profligate and corrupt with age; that heatheniſh moraliſts " thought the preſent to be a ſtate of puniſhment; and what might be added, that the " earth, our habitation, has the appearance of being a ruin; whoever, I ſay, will conſider all " theſe, and ſome other obvious things, will " think he has little reaſon to object againſt the " ſcripture account, that mankind is in a ſtate of " degradation; againſt this being the fact, how " difficult ſoever he may think it to account for, " or even to *form a diſtinct conception of the reaſons*, " and circumſtances of it."

To the above authorities may be added ſome letters in the *Turkiſh Spy*, on the ſubject; and ſome papers, if I miſtake not, in the *Rambler*; all which, giving together a kind of mutual ſanction to each others opinion upon the hypotheſis, ſerve at the ſame time to clear it from the imputation of being either an antiquated, obſolete, long-forgotten abſurdity, or a new, fanciful, indefenſible extravaganza. The reader is however to obſerve that my chief aim is to eſtabliſh that hypotheſis

† See his Anal. p. 111.

not

not upon *human* but on *Scripture* authority only ‡, to which the former is meant to ſerve by way of introduction; and were men to recollect, and attentively conſider, how ſtrongly poſſeſſed the heathen world was with a belief of a pre-exiſtent lapſe of human ſouls (and that more and more as the goſpel age advanced) and the perplexities and anxieties ariſing from ſuch a perſuaſion, their prejudices againſt the hypotheſis would, I doubt not, more eaſily ſubſide, and themſelves be more ready to embrace it as a goſpel truth. The reflecting part of the heathen world was, by a long courſe of experience, made ſenſible of the wickedneſs and corruption of human nature, but could by no means account for ſuch their calamitous ſituation, without ſuppoſing their ſouls to have exiſted in a *prior* ſtate; rightly concluding that they could not come *impure* from the hands of God. And this their ſenſe of a prior guilt was ſo ſtrongly impreſſed upon their minds, that they could not but reflect on it with the utmoſt dread and confuſion; eſpecially when they perceived what horrid immoralities, as well as pious inhumanities, iſſued from it. Diſpirited therefore from any attempts to recover the favour of their offended God, ſucceeding ages totally loſt ſight of both him and his laws; were ſo far from enjoying, or even wiſhing his *preſence*, that they did not chooſe to retain him in their knowledge, but lived *without God in the world*. And though they were not able wholly to *eraſe* the impreſſions of a Deity from their minds, yet ſo groſs were their conceptions of him, that they even *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man*. Nay the

‡ Upon the nature and tenor, I mean, of the goſpel diſpenſation.

worſhip due to the Creator they even proſtituted to an impious adoration of the meaneſt of his creatures, even *to birds, and four-footed beaſts, and creeping things.* And if the wiſer and more underſtanding part of the heathen world were not ſo wholly loſt in ignorance and error, yet they were notwithſtanding in a confeſſedly wretched and diſconſolate ſtate; they were ſenſible of their loſt innocency, and intereſt with their God; and, what conſiderably awakened their fears and apprehenſions, could not, by the light of reaſon alone, diſcern a probability, or even a poſſibility of attaining a future reconciliation. No hopes appeared for the recovery of loſt man, upon the merit of his own performances; nor could they think it probable that any other creature would undertake, or, if he did, would be able to accompliſh it for him. What created being could give a ſatisfaction for their prior violation of the laws of the great God of heaven, and the contempt of his authority? "Wherewith then ſhould the "conſcious criminal come before the Lord, and "bow himſelf before the High God! Should he "come before him with *burnt offerings*, with "*calves* of a year old! Would the Lord be pleaſed "with *thouſands of rams*, or with *ten thouſands of* "*rivers of oil!* Should he give his *firſt-born* for "his tranſgreſſion, the *fruit of his body* for the ſin "of his ſoul!" Alas! all this could be no ways effectual for their repoſe. For what, as a very ſenſible writer upon this ſubject obſerved, "What "proportion could there be between the momen-"tary ſufferings of a beaſt, and the eternal ſuffer-"ings due to ſin? Or how could the offering up "of one ſinner atone for the prior treſpaſſes of "another?"

§ 4. Either

§ 4. Either by the light of reaſon therefore, or ſome faint glimmerings of a prior revelation, they were made thoroughly ſenſible of the want of ſome more than common means for reſtoring them to their loſt righteouſneſs, and their Maker's forfeited regard. Nor did they think themſelves more in want of a *ſacrifice* for their prior guilt, than of an *advocate with the Father*, whom they had ſo egregiouſly injured. A mediator too they wanted, one whom they might addreſs, and by whom they might have acceſs to their offended God. Conſcious of their perſonal guilt and defilement, by means of original pre-exiſtent guilt, they feared to approach him of themſelves. Inſomuch that ſome of them were induced to renounce all immediate and perſonal application to him; chooſing rather to make interceſſion to *demons*, and other kind of middle beings, whom they might addreſs with *petitions*, and bribe with *ſacrifices* to mediate between them and their God *. Such was the melancholy, the uncomfortable condition of the heathen world for many ages together, from the fall of *Adam*, ſo diſpirited were they, and confounded at the conſciouſneſs they were under of an original, unatoned guilt upon their ſouls, till God was pleaſed at laſt, in the fulneſs of time, to open *a fountain for ſin and uncleanneſs*, and to make known to deſponding mortals the *exceeding riches* of his *grace* in that wonderful ſcheme of *redemption*, whereby he might continue *juſt*, and be a *juſtifier* of *his ſinful creatures*. Agreeably to which, ſays the apoſtle to the *Epheſians*, "*Ye who were afar off*," *i. e.* were aliens and ſtrangers from the light of God's countenance, by means of your pre-exiſtent

* See Stackhouſe's Body of Divinity, wherein this ſubject is treated of in the ſame light, though more at large.

guilt

guilt, *Ye are made nigh*, or reſtored to his favour and preſence, *by the blood of Chriſt.*

CHAP. VI.

A lapſe of human ſouls, as above conſidered, a branch of Chriſtian theology.

IN proof of this point I muſt deſire the reader's acceptance of the following long quotation from the very learned Mr. *Brockleſby*.

§ 1. " The ancient writers, ſays he, attribute a celeſtial and divine condition to *Adam* in his innocency; they ſuppoſe therefore that mankind are lapſed from a celeſtial and divine condition into a terreſtrial animal; which cannot be ſuppoſed, unleſs a celeſtial and divine condition did belong to human ſouls in a prior ſtate.

§ 2. " Chriſtians, ſays he, ſuppoſe, that the ſouls of men are heaven-born, ſaying the ſame thing with the pagan theologers, who thought ſcorn to derive the origin of their ſouls from the dirt. Their maxim was, *Noſtras animas deduci e cælo, redire in cælum; animorum nulla in terris origo inveniri poteſt*, as ſays *Cicero*. Again, many of the *Hebrew* doctors will have the ſoul, in *Hebrew* called *Niſhmah*, derived from *Shamaim*, the *Hebrew* term for heaven; becauſe the ſoul derives its origin from heaven. *P. Fagius* in *Gen.* ii. 7. And Chriſtian divines ſay, *Corpus e terra, et ſpiritum poſſidemus e cælo*; We have our body from the earth, our ſoul or ſpirit from heaven. *S. Cypr. de Orat. Dom.* *Origo ejus*, ſays *Lactantius*, *de cælo eſt*; Its origin is from heaven.

§ 3. " For this reaſon Chriſtian theologers call man *cæleſte animal*, a celeſtial animal. *Plato* calls him a celeſtial

celeſtial plant, οὐράνιον φύτον. The ſoul is then, ſays Mr. *Farrindon* in his ſermon on *Epheſ.* v. 1, moſt herſelf, and cometh nigheſt to her former eſtate, when, forgetting the weight and hindrance of the body, ſhe enjoys herſelf, takes wings, as it were, and ſoars up in the contemplation of God and his goodneſs; *Cum id ſe eſſe incipit, quod ſe eſſe credit,* as St. *Cyprian* ſpeaks; when ſhe begins to be that which ſhe muſt needs believe herſelf to be, of a celeſtial and heavenly beginning."

Thus the Chriſtian theologers, in concert with the pagan, derive the origin of human ſouls from heaven, and ſuppoſe them to deſcend from thence, *vel miſſi, vel lapſi:* but not till after ſome pre-exiſtent duration, and cohabitation with the bleſſed inhabitants; or elſe thoſe writers muſt have been at very unneceſſary pains to prove, what none but Atheiſts would undertake to diſprove, that the ſouls of men were the work of God's hand. But to return to our learned *Brockleſby.*

§ 3. "The proviſion for the ſoul's happineſs, ſays he, was no part of the proviſion that was made for man (but typically and ſymbolically only) in the creation of this world. It belonged to an antecedent creation; for all the furniture of this ſublunary world, what is it to the ſoul? Conſider the ſoul of itſelf, ſays Mr. *Farrindon,* and what relation or reference has it to any earthly things? Care for meats and drinks and apparel, for poſterity, to heap up riches, to be ambitious of honours, all theſe publicans, which demand and exact ſo much of our time and labour, befel the ſoul on the putting on this cloathing of the body. See his Serm. III. on *Matt.* vi. 33.

§ 4. How, ſays St. *Auſtin,* is the love of our country revived in us, which we had forgot by a long

long peregrination? And again, says he, Heaven is our country; which, perhaps, by a long peregrination, we have forgot. The Christian people, says another Christian writer, are invited to the delights of Paradise, and to all the regenerate a return is opened to their lost country. *Leo. M.* de Passion. Dom. Ser. 13. And, says St. *Chrysostom*, By Christ crucified two great things are done; for he hath opened Paradise, and introduced the thief; he restored him to his antient country; he reduced him to his paternal city.

§ 5. Christian writers suppose, that the souls of men, being Heaven-born, are now in a state of banishment from Heaven. The second petition of our Lord's Prayer [thy kingdom come] constrains us to confess, says *Luther* [apud Hoornbeck] with our own mouths, the sad calamity of our banishment. And a divine of our own, Dr. *Eedes*, concerning the original and present state of man, says as follows: His being in the world is but a kind of being in the wilderness, wherein he is estranged from the city of the Living God. Agreeably to which is the Apostle's address to the Ephesians—I beseech you, therefore, brethren, as strangers and pilgrims, that ye abstain from fleshly lusts, &c. Again, says another divine, having loosed the bonds of death, he, viz. Christ, opened the way to our heavenly country, from which all mankind had been banished for many thousand years. See Laurent. Surii Homil. p. 379. in die Paschæ.

§ 6. It is the belief of Christian writers, that mankind are fallen by sin from a supernal happy state.---We are cast from an high, says the above quoted divine, into the sink of this world. And we are, says St. *Basil*, by sin fallen to the earth.

In

In short, Christian divines in general, speak the sense of *Seneca* upon the point.

Tunc animus noster habebit, quod gratuletur sibi, cum emissus e tenebris in quibus volutatur, non tenui visu clara perspexerit, sed totum diem admiserit, et redditus Cælo suo fuerit. Cum receperit locum, quem occupavit sorte nascendi. Sursum vocant illum initia sua. Senec. Ep. 79. & 120.

§ 7. It is the firm perswasion of the antient fathers, that the souls of men were originally possessed of the divine image, which now they have lost, and that their regeneration is a restoration, and reduction thereto. *Greg. Nazianzen* says, that the soul is of God, and divine, and partakes of the supernal nobility, which is also her ancient nobility. She is of God, says St. *Chrysostom* not only in the general way, as all beings are of God, their Creator; nor only as being of more than human original [God being peculiarly the father of souls, or spirits] but if she was originally possessed of the Divine image, she was of God, as issuing from paternal sanctity. The souls of all men were divinely virtuous in their original creation; nor have they so totally lost the divine image, but that there are, as says St. *Augustine*, the feeble remains, the weak relicks of the image of God, the rudera, or broken pieces of our first building.---St. Aug. de Sp. & Lit. 6. 28. And how agreeable is all this to the nature and genius of the Christian dispensation! The end and design of the Christian regeneration being to renew in us the lost image of God, wherein we were originally created. Agreeably to which is a note of *Grotius* upon the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

All men, says he, are, originally, the sons of God, as this parable declares, but they lose that privilege

privilege by alienating themſelves from God. Hence, when he is converted, and regenerated, he is ſaid to be, Deo ſuo reſtitutus, reſtored to his God, ſays St. *Cyprian*. Therefore he did ſome time before belong to God, as one of his divine family. So the *loſt ſheep*, and the *loſt groat*, that afterwards were found, were ſometime in poſſeſſion of their owner. And the mighty benefits which Chriſtianity brings to the ſouls of men, are recovering, and reſtoring what *was*, not the introduction of what *never was*. And Chriſt ſends, ſays St. *Cyril*, his ſpirit into the ſouls of believers, transforming them εἰς εἶδος τὸ ἐν ἀρχαῖς, into the antient and original form.

And *Maximus*, the martyr, ſays, that the deſign of Chriſt's incarnation was to make us partakers of a divine nature, ὡς ἐπ' ἀρχῆς, as in the beginning.

The deſign of Chriſtianity, therefore, to regenerate ſouls into the holy life, and to raiſe them to the heavenly ſtate of purity, implies, that they are fallen from both, as the Fathers explicitly affirm, when they ſuppoſe the renovation of ſouls into the Divine image is their reſtauration. See *Brockleſby's Goſpel-Theiſm*, p. 504, &c.

CHAP. VII.

The ſcripture account of the Fallen Angels *illuſtrated, and confirmed; and the* human race *ſhewn to be complicated, and involved in their guilt.*

§ 1. THAT *human* ſouls are of coeval origin with *angelic*, and both the production of one inſtantaneous exertion of infinite power, it ſeems neceſſary to conclude; becauſe in the firſt place no reaſon can be aſſigned, why the Deity ſhould

ſhould give the preference implied in a priority of creation to this, or that order of intelligent natures, rather than to another: And ſecondly, becauſe a *ſucceſſive tradution* of ſouls, or a *daily creation* of them, one or other of which muſt elſe be ſuppoſed, is the one an actual impoſſibility in nature, and the other a ſuppoſition, ſuggeſting an idea of the Creator, than which there cannot be one more groſs and unworthy †.

§ 2. And that the *Moſaic* was not the *original creation of all things*, but that, prior to it, there exiſted an univerſe of rational beings, I look upon as a truth of which none but men of the moſt contracted ſentiments can entertain the leaſt doubt ‡.

§ 3. And

† A ſucceſſive traduction of ſouls is, as Dr. Henry More obſerves, "A plain contradiction to the notion of a ſoul, "which is a ſpirit, and therefore of an indiviſible, that is, of "an indiſcerpible eſſence. And a daily creation of them im"plies both an indignity to the majeſty of God (in making "him the chiefeſt aſſiſtant and actor in the higheſt, freeſt, and "moſt particular way in which the Divinity can be conceived "to act, in thoſe abominable crimes of whoredom, adultery, "and inceſt, by ſupplying thoſe foul coitions with new-created "ſouls for the purpoſe) and alſo an injury to the ſouls themſelves; "that they being ever thus created by the immediate hand of "God, and therefore pure, innocent, and immaculate, ſhould "be impriſoned in unclean, diſeaſed, and diſordered bodies, "where very many of them ſeem to be ſo fatally over"maſtered, and in ſuch an utter incapacity of cloſing with "what is good and virtuous, that they muſt needs be adjudged "to that extreme calamity, which attends all thoſe that forget "God." See Dr. More's Immortality of the Soul, p. 113.

See alſo Glanville's Lux Orientalis; where the above arguments are expatiated upon in a moſt comprehenſive and maſterly manner.

‡ It is the opinion of the generality of writers, who look no further than to the letter of the Moſaic hiſtory, that the whole frame of nature comes within the compaſs of the ſix days creation;

§ 3. And as every part of creation must, when issuing first from the hands of the Creator, be *perfect*

tion; that not only the sun, moon, and planets, but the immense system of the fixed stars, are there described as coeval with the formation of our earth: consequently they must hold, that till about six thousand years ago, the Deity existed alone, reigning over an absolute void, without either worlds or inhabitants. But as the contrary opinion may be fairly deduced from many passages in Scripture, so it is much more agreeable to our justest apprehensions of the Divine nature to suppose, that the fountain of power and goodness had created worlds, and communicated being to many orders of creatures long before our earth or its inhabitants had an existence. See Jameson, Pref. to his Exposit. of the Pentat.

Again; By the heaven, says Mr. Jackson on Gen. i. 1.—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,"—we are to understand the several systems of the sun, moon, planets, which were created before the formation of the earth, of which only Moses gives a particular account, and to which his history primarily belongs. It is said, "God made two "great lights," viz. the sun and the moon; and it is certain that the earth was, by God's almighty power, so situated, with respect to the position of the sun and moon, that they might have their proper influence over it, and so with propriety be said to have been new made to rule over its day and night. They now became properly a sun and moon to the earth, whether they were then created, when they first shone upon it, or before.

The Hebrew word עשה Asa, or Ase—rendered to make, signifies also to constitute, or appoint, or prepare; and so it may mean, that God appointed two great lights, the one to rule over the day, the other to rule over the night. And it is evident, that the word may be taken in the preterpluperfect tense, as it is in the 31st verse, where it is rightly rendered, "And God saw every thing that he had made."——Therefore, though it is undoubtedly true, that God made, or created the sun, moon, and stars, yet there is no need to understand that they are any part of the Mosaic creation, which comprehended only the heavens and the earth, or the earth with its firmament or atmosphere, which is called heaven. See Jackson's Chronol. Antiq. p. 4, 5.

Agreeably to which, another very learned and ingenious writer had before observed, that the original creation was ante-Mosaical;

fect in its *kind* (the fountain being pure, the ſtreams flowing therefrom muſt be pure alſo) it neceſſarily follows, that the univerſe of rational creatures came into being poſſeſſed of as large a ſhare of intellectual purity, and moral rectitude, as *finite* natures can be ſuppoſed capable of attaining, or an *all-perfect* power capable of creating. But from the very ſtate, and circumſtances of their exiſtence, and that *freedom of will*, which conſtituted them *moral agents*, it is eaſy, and even neceſſary to conceive, that though *pure*, and *perfect* in their *kind*, they were nevertheleſs *peccable*, and liable to *tranſgreſſion* †. It is an aſſertion of *Calvin*,

Moſaical; that the Moſaical Coſmopœia was not God's *original* creation, nor the creation of the *vaſt univerſe* of *rationals*, but a *ſecondary* creation, a creation of our *terreſtrial ſyſtem* only; and that our planetary globe, though in reſpect of the matter of it, it was a part of God's original creation, yet as formed and inhabited, did not belong to the original conſtitution of the univerſe. See Brocklesby's Chriſtian Trinitarian, p. 493, &c. The truth of which hypotheſis he ſupports by a variety of cogent arguments, ſome of which may occaſionally come in, perhaps, hereafter.

† "Unleſs a man, ſays Dr. Cheyne, give up all reaſon, philoſophy, and proportion, as well as analogy, and run into "downright ſcepticiſm, blind fate, witchcraft and enchantment, "he muſt ſuppoſe, that an infinitely wiſe and beneficent being "could not have created free and intelligent creatures, but for "ſome wiſe end and purpoſe. And to obtain this end he muſt "have made them at firſt ſound (ſo he is pleaſed to expreſs himſelf) in body and mind. How error, diſeaſes, miſery, and "death commenced, may readily be accounted for from the "abuſe of freedom and liberty, ſpurious ſelf-love, and an inordinate love of the creature." See Cheyne, Diſcourſe iv. p. 119.

An argument equally concluſive as to angels and men.

There is ſomething extremely rational and ſatisfactory, as to this point, in what follows from Dr. Jenkin.

"It muſt be conſidered, ſays he, that no created being can, "in its own nature, be uncapable of ſin or default: becauſe "it cannot be infinitely perfect; for it is inſeparable from all

 "creatures

Calvin, that the holy angels themſelves are not uncriminal, and uncondemnable; they are, " non " *ſatis juſti*;" not ſufficiently, or compleatly, juſt

" creatures to have but finite perfections; and whatever has " bounds ſet to its perfections is in ſome reſpect imperfect; " that is, it wants thoſe perfections which a being of infinite " perfections alone can have. So that imperfection is implied " in the very eſſence of created beings; and what is imperfect " may make default." Jenkin's Reaſon. of Chr. Rel. vol. ii. p. 238.

And again, p. 246, he ſays, " In the beginning God cre- " ated every thing perfect in its kind, and endued the angels " and men with all intellectual and moral perfections ſuitable " to their reſpective natures; but ſo as to leave them capable " of ſinning. For it pleaſed the infinite wiſdom of God to " place them in a ſtate of trial, and to put it to their own " choice whether they would ſtand in that condition of inno- " cence and happineſs in which they were created, or fall into " ſin and miſery. We have little or no account in the Scrip- " tures of the cauſe or temptation which occaſioned the fall of " angels, becauſe it doth not concern us," ſays he, (but it does concern us much more than he imagined) " to be ac- " quainted with it; and therefore it little becomes us to be " inquiſitive about it." (ſcarce any thing concerns us more, or merits a more diligent and earneſt enquiry.) But to proceed with our author— " Indeed it is very difficult to conceive, how " beings of ſuch great knowledge and purity, as the fallen an- " gels once were of, ſhould fall into ſin: but it is to be con- " ſidered that nothing is more unaccountable, than the mo- " tives and cauſes of action in free agents: when any being is " at liberty to do as it will, no other reaſon of his actings be- " ſides his own will need be enquired after.——But how per- " fect and excellent ſoever any creature is, unleſs it be ſo con- " firmed and eſtabliſhed in a ſtate of purity and holineſs, as to " be ſecured from all poſſibility of ſinning, it may be ſuppoſed " to admire itſelf, and dote upon its own perfections and ex- " cellencies, and by degrees to neglect and not acknowledge " God the author of them, but to ſin and rebel againſt him. " And it is moſt agreeable both to Scripture and reaſon, that " pride was the cauſe of the fall of angels." Jenk. vol. ii. p. 246, 247.

Whether this be, or be not, juſt reaſoning upon a matter of fact, as to the motives or cauſes from which it happened, it is quite unneceſſary for me to enquire at preſent.

and

and righteous. " The ſtars are not pure in God's " ſight," ſays Job, c. xxv. v. 5. And *abſolute impeccability* is, perhaps, the ſole prerogative of *God*.

§ 4. Accordingly Scripture informs us, that an order of celeſtial powers incurred in proceſs of time their Maker's diſpleaſure, by not keeping their *firſt eſtate*, and leaving their *habitations*.

" And the angels, which kept not their *firſt* " *eſtate*," ſays St. Jude, " but left their *own habi-* " *tation*, he hath reſerved in everlaſting chains " under darkneſs unto the judgment of the great " day." Jude 6th.

§ 5. For the more clear underſtanding of which important paſſage in holy writ, I obſerve, as follows, firſt, That each claſs, or diviſion of the angelic hoſt, had, from the beginning, and have ſtill a determinate region in Heaven aſſigned them, as their proper ſphere of glory, and peculiar place of reſidence.---Agreeably to which, ſays our Saviour, " In my father's houſe are many " manſions." John xiv. 2.---That the intellectual world, that part of it, I mean, with which we ſeem to have any connection, or of which we ſeem to have any intelligence, appears to have been ranked, and diſpoſed by the Creator, from the beginning, into ſeveral diſtinct claſſes, gradually ſubordinate to each other in dignity and power; in proportion, probably, to the different degrees of intellectual capacity, which the members of each claſs had been endowed with at firſt. Without ſome ſort of orderly gradation like this, the mind cannot frame to itſelf any idea of an exiſting ſociety, nor without ſuch a ſuppoſal a poſſibility of felicity even in Heaven †.

I obſerve

† If it be urged that a ſubordination of rank and quality in heaven, would argue an unequal diſtribution of power and

I obſerve, ſecondly, that in the paſſage alluded to, the original word Ἀρχὴ, which our tranſlators have rendered *firſt eſtate*, is that very word which in the plural number is ſo often uſed in the New Teſtament to denote ſome particular order of angels, and which, in all thoſe places, we tranſlate *principalities*.

Thirdly, I obſerve, that theſe two expreſſions of the "angels not keeping their firſt eſtate," and "their leaving their own habitations," are not deſigned to convey different, and ſeparate ſenſes, but are only explanatory the one of the other, as appears from the ſtructure of the ſentence,---The paſſage, therefore, ſhould be rendered thus:

"The angels, which kept not their own prinpality, [τὴν ἑαυτῶν Ἀρχὴν] but left their own habita-
"tion [τὸ ἴδιον Οἰκητήριον] he hath reſerved in everlaſting

authority, and a partiality in the ſupreme Lord thereof, interruptive of univerſal harmony and equal happineſs, and inconſiſtent with our idea of celeſtial fruition, I anſwer, that in minds not vitiated by pride and ambition, obedience to thoſe to whom reverence and eſteem is due, is a ſatisfaction of mind equal, at leaſt, to that which ariſes from a ſuperiority of power, &c. in thoſe to whom is allotted the preheminency.

That there was, however, is, and always will be, ſuch a ſubordination of rank and dignity in the celeſtial abodes, is evident from thoſe diſtinctions, which we meet with in Scripture, of angels and archangels, of cherubim and ſeraphim, of principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions. 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. Jud. ix. Ezek. x. Pſal. xviii. 10. Iſa. vi. 2. Rom. viii. 38. Epheſ. i. 21. iii. 10. vi. 12. Col. i. 16. ii. 10, 15.

Agreeably to which ſays St. Jerom——That there may be due order amongſt rationals, there muſt be τὰ πρῶτα, τὰ μέσα, τὰ ἔσχατα, the prime, the middle, and the laſt.

And again, ſays another writer, "It is in nature as in the "moſt perfect harmony, in an harmony of ſounds, that which "is of a middle nature maketh the conſonancy of the ex-"tremes; and in all apt compoſures ſomething of a middle "nature is requiſite." M. Tyr. Diſſ. 27. See Brock. p. 9.

" lasting chains." &c.---That therefore lastly the crime by which the angels fell in general was: That they kept not themselves within the bounds of their own proper sphere of dignity, and glory, but presumptuously deserted that subordinate rank and situation, which God had allotted them in the realms above.

§ 6 Hence it was, that that harmony, and tranquillity in heaven, which reigned unmolested before, underwent for a time, a reversed fate. He whom scripture stiles the *prince* of *devils*, one most probably of the *highest order* of spirits, moving in a sphere perhaps but a few degrees removed (to speak in the language of men) from the throne of God, and disdaining even the *first* degree of *inferiority*: He, I say, set up his standard against the Most High, inlisted under his banner a multitude of mutinous, and aspiring ingrates, aiming by their assistance to rule independent of the will, and authority of the omnipotent, and even to give law to the very Being that gave him life.

— — — — — " aspiring
" To set himself in glory above his peers,
" He trusted to have equall'd the Most High,
" If he opposed, and with ambitious aim
" Against the throne, and monarchy of God
" Rais'd impious war in heav'n, and battle proud,
" With vain attempt."

For now the traiterous chieftain, and his infatuated adherents, drew upon themselves the vengeance of heaven, were banished their celestial habitations, and reserved in everlasting chains,

under darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day. *

§ 7 To the ſame purpoſe the viſion of St. John: " There was war in heaven; *Michael*, and his " angels fought againſt the *dragon*, and the *dra-* " *gon* fought and his angels, and prevailed not, " neither was there place found any more in hea- " ven. And the great *dragon* was caſt out, that *old* " *ſerpent*, called the *devil*, and *ſatan* which deceiv- " eth the whole world: he was caſt out into the " earth, and his angels were caſt out with him." Apocal. xii. 7, 8, 9.

And I make no doubt but the prophet Iſaiah had a remote alluſion to this Arch-Rebel's aſpiring pride, and its fatal conſequences, in that prophetic triumph over the king of *Babylon*, exhibited in the following lofty paſſage.

" How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, " ſon of the morning! How art thou caſt down " to the ground which didſt weaken the nations!"

" For thou haſt ſaid in thine heart, I will aſcend " into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the

* By the words " everlaſting chains under darkneſs." we are to underſtand a ſtate of confinement in or about this earth, which, when oppoſed to the inexpreſſible glory and brightneſs of the divine preſence, may aptly enough be expreſſed by " chains under darkneſs."——See Dr. *Hunt*'s diſſertation on the fall.

And the conjecture is not a little countenanced by certain paſſages in ſcripture, where the chief of the devils is called the prince of the power of the *air*, and the devils in general, " Wicked ſpirits in high places"----Ephes. ii. 2. and vi. 12. And both *Homer*, and *Heſiod*, uſe ἀὴρ for ζόφος caligo, darkneſs.

———Ἠέρι δ' ἐγχος ἐκέκλιτο, καὶ ταχὺ ἵππω.

Homer's Iliad. v. 355.

Ἠέρα ἐσσάμενοι, πάσῃ φοιτῶντες ἐπ' αἴαν.

Heſiod, Ἔργ. καὶ Ἡμερ, l. 124.

" ſtars

" ſtars of God: I will ſit alſo upon the mount of " the congregation in the ſides of the north,"

" I will aſcend above the heights of the clouds, I " will be like the moſt High." Iſ. xiv. 12. 13. 14.

To theſe ſcriptural notices of that event may be added in confirmation of the truth of it many obvious alluſions, and even expreſs and poſitive declarations from ancient theologers. *

§ 8. But to proceed—To ſuch daring lengths of inſolent impiety did this Arch-Rebel proceed, that, notwithſtanding the galling defeat he ſuſtained in heaven, he perſiſted ſtill in his avowed emulation, placed himſelf at the head of the prin-

* Minutius Felix's deſcription of demons is, " that their " motion is a *heavy ſinking* from heaven, and that they with- " draw from the *true God* to *matter*."---" A Cœlo deorſum " gravant, et a Deo vero ad materiam avocant." § 27.

And Athenagoras ſays,---that when the angels were created, the things of the creation were committed to their care, and the prince of the apoſtate angels was originally the ruler, and preſident of the matter and forms that are in it. Ὁ τῆς ὕλης, καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ εἰδῶν ἄρχων Apol. 27. 28. Gr. Nyſſen, and J. Damaſcen ſuppoſe, that when the world was created, the ſeveral parts of it were committed to ſeveral orders of angels, that he who was the devil, was preſect of the terrene order, having the preſidency over the earth, and the adminiſtration of terrene things. And the name by which the Rabbins called the devil viz, מרוך ſignifying the apoſtate, is plainly alluſive to his apoſtacy from God; as is alſo another of his uſual appellations, viz. Satanas, or ſatan, the original import of which word is Ἀποστάτης, the *apoſtate*.

The cabaliſtical book Zohar treating of lapſed angels ſays----God threw them down headlong, bound, and enchained.----Theſe were *Aza* and *Azael*, which R. Eleazar ſays were two angels, which accuſed their Lord, and God caſt them out of the holy place headlong.

And the pagans diſcourſe of a ſort of evil genii, paſſively and penally ſuch, which are called by Plutarch---Οἱ Θεόκλατοι, καὶ ἐρανοπετεῖς ἐκεῖνοι τῶν Ἐμπεδοκλέους δαίμονες.---" Thoſe " God-agitated, and heaven-fallen demons of Empedocles " See Brokleſby, page 29, 30, 31.

clpal of the Rebel-Rout, and erected at once, in deſpite of his Maker's power, or by his permiſſion rather, for wiſe, and good purpoſes, a ſeparate, antitheiſtical ſovereignty. An aerial region was his deſtined reſidence, ſituated, as it is generally ſuppoſed, within the atmoſphere, or circumambient air of this our terreſtrial globe. *

§ 9 The apoſtle ſpeaks of it as ἐπουράνιος an *aerial abode*, and ſtiles Satan both the prince of the *devils*, and the prince of the *power*, [τῆς ἐξουσίας] i. e. the *dominion* of the *air*. A moſt fatal vicinity this to the inhabitants of this world! For theſe refractory and rebellious ſpirits, though enchained under darkneſs, are yet permitted, we find, under certain limitations of their active powers, to *range about* the earth beneath. Job i. 7. Apoc. xvi. 13. where they have made it their conſtant buſineſs to ſeduce mankind into apoſtacy, to draw them off from their natural allegiance to God, and ſubject them to the kingdom of darkneſs. Col. i. 13. †

A prelude to which multiplied miſeries was Adam's deliberate ſurrender of his virtue and integrity to Satan, when acting, as we find it re-

* As other beings have their proper regions, ſo there is, ſays a Greek writer, a land or country of Satan, where the powers of darkneſs, and ſpirits of wickedneſs live and walk, and have their reſting place.

"Ουτως ἐτὶ γῆ, καὶ παιρὶς σατανικὴ ἔ διαγωσι, καὶ ἐμπεριπατῦσι, καὶ ἐπεναπάυονται αι δυνάμεις τῦ σκότε, καὶ τὰ πνεύματα πῆς πονηρίας

S. Macarius Hom. 14.

† "Rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them," ſays "the apocalyptic apoſtle.---"But woe to the inhabitants of "the earth, and of the ſea, for the devil is come down unto "you, having great wrath, becauſe he knoweth that he "hath but a ſhort time." Apoc. xii. 12.

lated

lated by Moſes, under the diſguiſe of a ſubtle ſerpent. *

For after having affected the ſecond lapſe of the original pair, he made in proceſs of time an eaſy conqueſt of their corrupted poſterity, ſucceſſively overwhelmed them in an almoſt univerſal deluge of ignorance, and error, atheiſm, polytheiſm, and idolatry, and every kind of ſpiritual and carnal impurity. And in order to diffuſe upon earth the ſame miſchievous practices, by which he, and his aſſociates, forfeited Heaven, how active has he all along been in ſtirring up men of the like aſpiring ſpirits to reſiſt their lawful governors, to foment riots, and ſeditions, and to involve whole ſtates, and kingdoms, in the miſeries of rebellion, anarchy, and civil tumults: ("traytors have never "better company," as ſays *Shakeſpear*. †) And in this manner did he lord it over the bulk of mankind for many ages together without controul, blinding their minds, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, and working in the children of diſobedience, exacting of them the moſt unnatural and ſhocking inſtances of *devotion*, the offering up their ſons and their daughters to devils, invading at length, and taking poſſeſſion of their unhallowed bodies, and not only this, but actuating and tormenting them at his cruel pleaſure.

§ 10 This is in brief the ſum and ſubſtance,

* That the *ſerpent* muſt be figuratively underſtood of the *devil* acting by the *ſerpent*, is plain, not only from the impoſſibility of crafty beaſts over-reaching mankind in their higheſt pitch of knowledge, but from the atteſtation of other parts of ſcripture, where the devil is called the *old ſerpent*. Rev. xii 9. and xx. 2. and where he is by our Saviour ſaid to have been a murderer from the beginning,---alluding to his miſchievous devices at the fall. See *Jameſon* in Loco.

† Hen. vi. p. 1.

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the rise, progress, and consequence of that memorable event, the fall of those Rebel Angels, which scripture gives us in part, and which is shadowed out to us not obscurely by both Heathen, and Jewish theology. And a most awful interesting event it is! An event so comprehensive as to its objects, as well as diffusive of its mischievous effects, as to have involved in sin and misery, the the whole race of human beings. All nature shared in that original guilt, all nature groans now under the ruinous weight of it. * "The "whole creation groaneth and travelleth in pain "of it until now." For lo! All, who have trod this mother earth of ours (some few righteous ones only perhaps excepted) had associated with the apostate powers, assimulated with them in their various vices, joined them in their revolt from God, ranked with them under the banner of the vile usurper, aided his foul rebellion, † and became

* By *nature* I wou'd not be understood to include here the *universe in general*, but that *sublunary part* of *intelligent nature* to which we belong.

† The author expresses himself here, in terms accommodated to the account given of that event, by the *Apocalyptic apostle*, who stiles it a *war in heaven*.——"There was war in hea-"ven; *Michael*, and his angels, fought against the *Dragon*, "and the Dragon fought and his angels." Apoc. xii. 7. The reader must therefore consider the one in the same figurative point of view, in which reason directs him to place the other. The vision here alluded to was of both a *retrospective* cast, and *prophetic*, shewing that a train of devices, similar to those by which Satan (the dragon) aimed too successfully to draw his fellow creatures from their duty to their creator, and to inveigle them into acts of impiety, and moral obliquity in heaven, (all which were acts of rebellion against God) would be continued for a time by the divine permission, tho' with the like overthrow at last, against the church, or the *kingdom of heaven* to be established upon earth;

came captives from that period to his tyrannous authority. † Elſe wherefore, in the firſt place, is it, that

earth; which appears very evidently to have been the caſe. vid. *Hammond*, and other commentators in Loco.

The only idea therefore, which we can form of the fall of angels from the very ſhort account given us of it in ſcripture is that of an apoſtacy (in one tribe, or principality perhaps) from piety, and moral rectitude; which, conſtituting a kind of rebellion againſt the Majeſty of God, ſomewhat ſimilar to the revolt of a temporal colony, or province from the allegiance due to the lawful Sovereign, and that by the inſtigation, and under the command of a leader choſen from among themſelves, brought *all* at laſt under the ſame ſentence of expulſion, or baniſhment from the divine preſence. But as the diſtinguiſhing eye of the Deity, when ſurveying the extenſive overthrow, could not but ſeparate, as intended objects for his future indulgence, the *leſſer* ſort of offenders from the greater, inſtead of aſſigning *us* a dwelling among thoſe, whom he *hath reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs*, God has been pleaſed to give us a *probationary* abode *here*; which, though from its incidental calamities of one kind or other, a kind of *hell*, compared with the felicities forfeited above, is an *heaven*, when contraſted with thoſe regions of miſery to which are doomed the firſt ſeducers of fallen man. The reader will not therefore be ſo undiſcerning, or unfair as to charge me with ranking mankind in general with the *infernal* powers. No, my Hypotheſis does not require a belief ſo horrid; and the contrary is a plain poſitive ſcripture truth. Whatever may have been our connection with them in a prior ſtate, we are with reſpect to them, apparently now a detached ſpecies of beings, are brought into a region, where drop continual dews of divine grace, are ſent hither as candidates for a reſtoration to our loſt happineſs (of which the others are not yet deemed worthy) with the ſeeds of a new, and divine life impregnated in us—the *ſeed of the woman*, that will at length finally *break the ſerpent's head*. And the only *Criterion*, by which to determine what was our *reſpective ſhares* in a pre-exiſtent guilt, is that *natural taſte*, and diſpoſition of mind, with which we come into the world, and of which *ſelf-intuition* is the only unerring judge-

† This, though a general poſitive poſition, reaſon ſurely will direct every one to conſider with due limitation, and not to conclude, if all mankind were involved in the guilt of

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that ſcripture repreſents men in their *natural*, *unregenerate* ſtate, not only as alienated from God and goodneſs, ſinners even from their birth, but as *connected* with the prince of thoſe powers that fell by *ties* of the moſt *intimate* kind, as creatures totally devoted to his ſervice, equally apt for diabolical practices, and of the ſame rank and quality in the ſcale of intellectual beings with him?

"When the ungodly curſeth Satan," ſays the wiſe ſon of *Sirach*, "he curſeth his own ſoul." Eccluſ. xxi. 27.

Again, "Ye are of your father the devil," ſays our Saviour to the infidel Jews, "and the deeds," (τὰ ἔργα) "the works of your father ye will "do;" intimating, that they, who had not only blaſphemouſly belied him, by telling him that he was a Samaritan, and had a *devil*, but had alſo gone about to *kill him*, gave evident tokens of their affinity and affection to him who was "a "*murderer* from the beginning, and abode not in "the *truth*, becauſe there is no truth in him." John. viii. 41. 45.

Again. "He that committeth ſin," ſays St. John, "is of the devil, for the devil ſinneth "from the beginning." 1ſt. John iii. 8. *

the fallen angels, that they were all *equally* criminal and notorious in tranſgreſſion, any more than were thoſe, that were deſtroyed by the *Noachic flood*, or ſuch as ſhared in the total overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*.

* He that committeth ſin, That is, he that is in a *ſtate of ſin*, (in which we are all by nature,) "is of the devil," in like manner as he that is "*born of God*," *regenerate*, and *born anew*, "ſinneth not," i. e. is not in a *ſtate of ſin*, is not under that *prior guilt*, and pollution of ſoul, with which he was born into this world. And I would willingly hope, that this is all, which the *methodiſts* mean, when they aſcribe a kind of impeccability, to thoſe who are regenerated to a true faith in Chriſt. For in that caſe they are perfectly *right*. But of this, more *hereafter*.

Again.

Again. "Ye are from *beneath*," ſays our Saviour to the unbelieving Jews, "I am from above." John viii 23.--Ye are ἐκ τῶν κάτω, from the *powers below*, I am ἐκ τῶν ἄνω, from the *powers above*. That is, ye are united by the ſame kind of alliances, friendſhips, connections, and attachments to the powers below, that I am to the powers above: An explanation of that paſſage, that will appear, I believe, when critically, and fairly attended to, perfectly juſt. And in fact, without ſuppoſing ſome ſuch prior connection with the *rulers* of the *darkneſs* of this world, with thoſe *ſpiritual wickedneſſes among the aerial inhabitants*, † the vicinity of our abode, to the place where dwell thoſe apoſtate powers; Satan's early and artful practices upon our firſt parents, continued with too much ſucceſs ſtill upon their unhappy progeny; the ſovereignty he has been permitted to eſtabliſh here, and the various, ſubtle, and inſinuating, or elſe cruel and oppreſſive arts, by which it has ſo long been upheld, are circumſtances in the courſe of the divine providence not eaſily, if at all reconcileable with our ideas of *God*, of infinite *juſtice*, *goodneſs*, and *mercy*. But an allowed preexiſtent concurrence with the fallen powers, as above ſuppoſed, clears away at once every the leaſt appearance of injuſtice, or inconſiſtency in the ways of God to man. Nor is it poſſible for any hypotheſis to ſtrike the reflecting and unprejudiced mind more forceably, and even irreſiſtably. Come now then my dear reader and let us reaſon a little together with impartiality and candor.

§ 11 Had there ſubſiſted between man and the

† That is the true import of τὰ πνευμάτικα τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις.

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apoſtate powers, no kind of prior intercourſe, alliances, and connections, how comes it that we ſo frequently diſcern in the one a ſpontaneous growth of intellectual principles, and affections ſo correſpondent altogether with thoſe by which are uſually characterized, and diſtinguiſhed the other? How is it that the undiſciplined, unregenerate heart of man ſends forth ſo plenteous an harveſt of corrupt paſſions, and deſires ſo diſgraceful to human nature, ſo congenial to helliſh minds, and ſo impulſive at the ſame time to diabolical villanies, and horrid cruelties? ſhould we ranſack *hell* for impieties to offend *heaven*, for treachery, deceit, and fraud, to entrap, over-reach, and ruin man, nay, and even for barbarities to murder with equal unreſervedneſs and unrelentings his perſon, and his reputation, is it poſſible we could find *there* willing agents for either purpoſe more apt, and accompliſhed than are to be found in almoſt every corner here? Alas no!—Men over partial to their own hearts, and their own actions (of which ſort much the major part of the world conſiſts) will think the above picture of *naked* nature, a piece unreſembling real life altogether, a portrait unjuſt, ungenerous, and ſhamefully unworthy an human pencil. What! ſhall a man dare to draw a true image of *God* in the ſemblance, and ſimilitude of a meer *devil?* Is there no honour, honeſty, or integrity, in the heart of man? Is he totally abſorb'd in impiety, iniquity, unjuſt, ungenerous, and unworthy purſuits? Has he no ſympathetic feelings of humanity? No tenderneſs and compaſſion for his fellow creatures? is he not a *fellow-ſufferer* in their wants, their misfortunes, their diſtreſſes? Does he not oftentimes put forth an eager hand to give bread to the hungry, to clothe the naked with a garment, and

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to releaſe from the loathſome priſon the inadvertent and unfortunate? If there are vices among men of the moſt heinous and deepeſt die, is there not an equal ballance at leaſt of the faireſt, and moſt reſplendent virtues? Has ſuch an one been proved an actual pilferer of your private property, a diſpoiler of your reputation, falſe to your friendſhip, treacherous, and unfaithful to your confidence? Who is there that holds not each of theſe characters in the utmoſt deteſtation? Are there robbers, and deceivers of a more outrageous, abominable, diabolical caſt, plunderers of their *country*, preyers upon the very vitals of their *native* land, builders of a *private* magnificence upon the ruins of that moſt venerable, and only valuable edifice: *public intereſt?* Be it, that there are, or rather have been men of ſuch enormous villany, yet does there not ſtep forth now and then one armed with the breaſt-plate of patriotic virtue, of a ſteady unwearied reſolution to vanquiſh the deſtructive *Hydra?* Does impiety, infidelity, or atheiſm, rear its impudent head againſt Heaven; a ſelf-aſſuming, ſelf-ſufficient, half-reaſoning, *nothing?*

" Who but muſt laugh, if ſuch a man there be?
" Who wou'd not weep, if B—— were he?

Does again hypocriſy wear the maſque of devotion, coveteouſneſs that of frugality, and treachery put on the face of friendſhip? Allowing, that there are of theſe deſpicable characters, not a few, yet why muſt the men of true piety, generoſity, and diſintereſted worth, be overlooked? And do not in reality the latter, if thrown in the ſcale of obſervation, and actual experience, equipoiſe, as I obſerved before, if not overbalance the utmoſt weight you can make up from the former

former? Wherefore then this crying invective againſt human nature? Wherefore ſo unamiable, ſo unbecoming, ſo unreſembling a picture of man? as a portrait I mean of the whole ſpecies.

§ 12 This is a retort upon the ſuppoſed injury done above to the character of my fellow creatures, which has been obviated in a great degree, I imagine, before; yet ſomething more perhaps may ſeem neceſſary to be urged in proof of that *ſuppoſed* ſimilarity of principles and practices in the *generality* of the human race, with thoſe, which conſtitute the moral portrait of the apoſtate powers.

Are any of us then worthy to be ranked in the number of the pious, juſt, generous, friendly, tender-hearted, and compaſſionate? Are any of us lovers of our neighbours and country, in preference to any mean, dirty, worthleſs conſiderations with reſpect to ourſelves? Are we in ſhort any of us poſſeſſed of a *conſcience void of* offence towards God, and towards men? To what ſource, let me aſk, can we with any propriety, or the leaſt ſhadow of truth, aſcribe each individual's reſpective ſhare of this happineſs? If it ariſes not *wholly*, and *ſolely* from *nature*, my Hypotheſis ſtands on ſure ground. And that that is not the caſe, *ſcripture*, and experience, prove inconteſtably. Is it then from *education*, that we are to deduce the happy exemption from flagrant vice? Do we owe it to any ſalutary *precepts*, enforced by engaging *examples*, or to thoſe more efficacious means for attaining it, the invigorating, regenerating efforts of the *divine ſpirit?* What does all this, I would aſk, prove? Why nothing more or leſs in ſhort, than that many of us, by the benefit of thoſe aids above ſuppoſed, eſcape being the abandoned wretches we ſhould have been *without* them. But

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to make a true eſtimate of this boaſted image of *God*, *Man*, we muſt eraſe all its *artificial*, *ſcripture'd* graces, and embelliſhments, ſtrip it of the *borrowed ornaments*, and decent drapery of *erudition*, &c. and view it devoid even of that *righteouſneſs*, *which is of faith*. The miſchief is, we look only at the *fair ſide* of the object, becauſe there the view, though *imperfect*, and *incompleat*, is the more *engaging*, not conſidering, that if we examined the *other ſide*, or explored human nature, where ſhe appears in her native dreſs, we ſhould ſee a picture of wretchedneſs and horror; we forget what a ſmall portion of *nature* is ſeen by the eye of common obſervation. An *infiniteſſimal* part only (as the ſchoolmen word it) appears of what is called the *world*; and this it is, that makes us judge ſo erroneouſly, when ſpeaking of nature's *native amplitude*. Indulge but one moment's reflection on the horrid barbarities of the *ſavage*, i. e. the undiſciplined, uneducated, unregenerated, unchriſtianized *Indians*, and "to what ſhall we liken "that generation,"—but to a race of *demi-devils*, to a "generation of vipers," whom for their more extraordinary *impieties* in a *prior ſtate*, providence does not pleaſe to enable as yet, to "flee from "the wrath to come."

§ 13. In ſhort, the nature and tenor of the goſpel diſpenſation ſuppoſe, of courſe, the Indian world to be under the power and dominion of ſin, and Satan, (and I wiſh I could exclude from this *anathema*, ſome other nations pretendedly *Chriſtian*) or ſcripture means nothing in declaring, that the *unregenerate* are *Aliens* from *God*, and *godneſs*, children of *wrath*, children of the *devil*. Can we wonder then at thoſe ſhocking *cruelties*, and *unfeeling* practices, to which they are ſo notoriouſly familiarized, and accuſtomed? Who is the *God*, that

directs and rules *their* hearts? Alas! It is not the *God of Heaven*. For him they had deserted, and to his favour are not yet restored. They are aliens from God under the power of the evil one, and while they remain unconverted, must continue in that state of bondage*; or Christianity, the (supposed) sole restorer of fallen man to God, and deliverer from the power of Satan, means nothing. Redemption, regeneration, satisfaction, are *idle words*, meer *bagatelles*. Do *they* then, as well as millions of others more refined, more civilized, more moralized, but alas! not christianized, do they *all*, I say, labour under the tyranny of the *devil*, and *his works* will they do? Why they are *his own*: "he comes to his own, and his own "receive him, alas! too naturally, and affectino-"ately".----This is in effect the language of Christianity, or Christianity is, and speaks I know not what. †

§ 14. Without supposing a prior connection with the apostate powers, how is it possible to account for that *early deflection* in our primogenial parents from *moral rectitude*, by which they for-

* What may be the fate of those who die in that state, I shall consider in part II. Let it not however be hastily concluded in the mean time, that *all* who are objects of the divine wrath *here*, must necessarily remain such hereafter.

† If in this declaration I shall be proved to be in the wrong, by fair arguments, I will with the utmost sincerity, and compunction, beg pardon of God, and man, for publishing to the world a production so iniquitous, and shall not scruple at the same time to ascribe it wholly to the suggestion of him who deceiveth the "whole world." In the mean while I must own, that the more I contemplate the doctrine of preexistence in this light, the more I am confirmed in my belief of it; and the more so, as it serves so effectually to render *Christianity* so worthy of all acceptation; which I hope to make appear very sufficiently hereafter.

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feited, in violation of the ſtrongeſt ties of duty, gratitude, and natural affection, their Maker's regard, involved themſelves, and their poſterity, in ſcenes of the deepeſt diſtreſs, and added freſh triumph to the too ſucceſsful diſturber of Heaven's repoſe? What but hearts already alienated from the love of God, could have yielded ſo very readily to the beguiling enticements of ſo open a traducer of God's authority, goodneſs, and juſtice? What but minds groſsly depraved in a *prior*, could have given birth to ſo foul a procedure in their *ſubſequent* paradiſaical ſtate? That the long train of villanies, and impieties, which ſucceeded their horrid tranſgreſſion, ſhould ariſe from the ſame ſource, is eaſily enough conceived. Nor can we wonder in the leaſt at Cain's committing murder, when we are told that "the *devil* was a murderer "from the beginning," and that "*Cain* was of "that evil one." And how uninterrupted the ſucceſſion of moral evil was till it terminated in an almoſt entire extinction of the human ſpecies by a judicial flood, we read with *horror* indeed, but with little, or no *ſurprize*: and in the ſame manner are we affected, when contemplating that *torrent* of vice and impiety which deluged the whole ſucceeding race of mortals, who were afterwards all *concluded under ſin*, and ſerved only to compoſe a *world lying in wickedneſs*. And nothing is more evident from ſcripture, and the hiſtory of ages paſt, than that the Heathen world conſiſted, in general, of a moſt helpleſs, hopeleſs, abandon'd race of animals; wretches, from whom the God of all power and might had withdrawn the arm of protection. He in whom were originally emboweled all their hopes, their comforts, and their warmeſt aſpirations, had diſlodged them from his

heart, diſcarded them from his favour and affection, baniſhed them his divine preſence, and aſſigned them over to the ſole guidance of his rival, the prince of darkneſs.

But of this I have ſpoken pretty fully already, and ſhall now proceed to ſhew how conſiſtent the above reaſoning is with the nature and tenor of the goſpel diſpenſation.

CHAP. VIII.

A pre-exiſtent guilt *in man, ariſing from a* prior aſſociation *with the* apoſtate powers, *the very* ground work *of the* goſpel diſpenſation.

§ 1 ARE we not evidently repreſented in ſcripture as born in ſin, by nature the children of wrath, and under the power and dominion of ſin, and Satan? Do we not come into the world with a load of guilt upon our ſouls, with ſome foul ſtains in our intellectual frame, by which the original dignity of our nature is debaſed? And is not the exalted deſign of the goſpel œconomy to expiate, and atone for that original guilt, to purify our corrupted nature, to reſcue us from the powers of darkneſs, and to reinſtate us into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God? But this guilt, what in the name of reaſon can it be? And theſe intellectual and moral impurities, what and whence can be their nature, and origin? That guilt, can it poſſibly be any thing elſe than of a *perſonal kind?* And thoſe mental impurities, where can we ſuppoſe them

them to have been contracted *, but with thoſe very corrupt and impure ſpirits, who are now ſo aſſiduous in renewing, and increaſing them within us? But further ſtill, is the guilt, with which we ſtand indicted at our birth, and at our baptiſm, of ſo malignant, horrid, and deſtructive a nature, as that nothing leſs, than the *blood* of the *only begotten ſon of God* could be effectual for its expiation and attonement, and is it at the ſame time in reality no actual crime of our own? Is it in the nature of things conceivable, that ſo extraordinary a ſatisfaction ſhould be demanded by the All-juſt, All-good, and All-merciful God, for a crime charged upon innocence itſelf? And yet, ſhocking as it is to reflecting minds, what leſs horrid, impious, and even blaſphemous idea, is implied in the ſuppoſal, that the original guilt, from which we are releaſed by the merits of Chriſt, is derived wholly and ſolely from Adam's treſpaſs in Paradiſe; and not from a prior aſſociation with the apoſtate powers? That the latter, however, is the truth, will be further urged, and the many momentous advantages ariſing to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, from this hypotheſis, will be made appear in the following chapters, wherein will be applied doctrine of a pre-exiſtent lapſe.

* For *contracted* they muſt have been, or *infuſed* by our *Maker*; if the latter, then the *author of nature*, is the *author of evil.*

CHAP. IX.

The hypothesis of a pre-existent lapse of human souls applied, and several important points of Doctrine viewed in a clear and consistent light through that medium.

§ 1. WHAT a rational and most awful idea arises to the mind from a contemplation of the Christian dispensation, when viewed through the medium of a pre-existent lapse of human souls, instead of a supposed *imputed* guilt from Adam! How amiable and exalted, how worthy of all acceptation is the mediatorial œconomy, when grounded on the former hypothesis! What more worthy a God of infinite wisdom, goodness, and mercy, than, by means suitable to his dignity and glory, to call back to his love, his favour, his protection, creatures beguiled into disloyalty, and disobedience by an artful, ambitious, enterprizing rival of his power and authority! And how engaging, and endearing must be that love, which so benevolently interposed to effectuate the compassionate design! "How worthy is the Lamb that was "slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, "and strength, and honour, and glory, and bless-"ing" for so noble, so exalted a purpose as this---for thus "coming into the world to save sinners!" to "preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind "up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to "the captives, and the opening of the prison to "them that are bound." Isa. lxi. 1. to be made an "offering for sin," for *original* sin, that *pre-existent* sin, by which *we* forfeited the favour of God's

God,--- to be " brought as a lamb to the ſlaugh-" ter"—" to give his life a ranſom for all"---to be " a propitiation for our ſins, and to make *recon-* " *ciliation* with *God* for them," by ſharing in the multiplied miſeries and calamities of human nature, without having been a partaker of that pre-exiſtent guilt from which they enſued. " He was cut off, but not for himſelf, Dan. ix. 26. " he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed " for our iniquities," Iſa. liii. 5.--- was made a ſin, and a curſe for us, 2 Cor. v. 21. Galat. iii. 13. died for the ungodly, " ſuffered for the unjuſt," 1 Pet. iii. 18.---" taſted death for every man," Heb. ii. 9.---" that through death he might de-" ſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, " the devil, * and deliver them, who through fear " of death were all their life-time ſubject to bon-" dage," Heb. ii. that he might " finiſh tranſgreſſion " and make an end of ſin," † that he might " make " reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlaſt-" ing righteouſneſs." Dan. ix. 24. Hence it is that he became a " full, perfect, and ſufficient, ſacri-" fice, oblation, and ſatisfaction, for the ſins of " the whole world." Hence it is, that the " chaſ-" tiſement of our peace was upon him, and with " his ſtripes we were healed," Iſa. liii. 5.---that we are reconciled to the Father in his croſs, " and " in the body of his fleſh through death," Col. i. 21. 22.---" are ſanctified by the offering of his

* The prince of the fallen angels,—the God of this world; him to whom we are, by nature, children, ſervants, ſubjects.

† *To make an end of ſin*,—that is to make an end of the *guilt*, and *puniſhment* of ſin, of *original*, *pre-exiſtent* ſin, moſt undoubtedly; for " ſin ſtill reigns in our mortal bodies," and " there is none yet, that doth good, no not one."

" body once for all," Heb. x. 10. are redeemed by his blood, as of a Lamb without blemish, and " without spot," 1 Pet. i. 18. 19.---Hence lastly it is, that Christ " is the mediator of " the New Testament" and " that by means of " death for the redemption of the transgressions," (the original transgressions under, and unattoned for, or unexpiated by the first testament) " they " which are called might receive the promise of " eternal inheritance," Heb. ix. 15.---" the pro- " mise being made to all, that are afar off, even " as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts. ii. 39. *

§. 2.

* *As many as the Lord our God shall call.* This last passage, viewed through the medium of pre-existence, suggests to me, on a sudden, a persuasion, that there is something more in the doctrine of *election* and *reprobation*, than is generally apprehended. For thongh the great work of redemption will, we may reasonably hope, become *universal* at last, yet is it evident from scripture, that God means to have it *gradually* accomplished, by a partial election, and temporary rejection of those, who lie under the guilt of a pre-existent apostacy. For as all the seed of Abraham were not the children of the promise.—*As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,*—so neither were all the sons of Adam meant to be partakers of the benefit of the gospel œconomy, or the redemption obtained by it. It was intended to be a *partial* redemption only. " *As many as thou gavest me,*" says our Saviour, " *I have kept.*" But though *many* were *called*, yet but *few* were *chosen*. And in this, it is plain there was no *unrighteousness* with God; when we consider that all had so sinned in a prior state, as to have forfeited their Maker's favour in a greater or less degree, in proportion to the measure of their respective demerits. And therefore providence has wisely ordered that the most abandoned of the fallen race, should sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and that others, more deserving of the divine clemency, should behold with a proportioned gratitude, that day spring from on high that has visited *us*. And thus a seeming *partiality* in divine providence *here* is perfect *equity*, but, as I humbly apprehend not otherwise. Then may God

§. 2. And now is it possible for *deists* to behold, and not with the utmost raptures embrace Christianity, when placed in so consistent, so amiable a light? will they now think scorn of our faith, and treat it still with their wonted contempt and derisive blasphemies? who will not now, on the contrary, glory in having been received into the *congregation of Christ's flock?* Who will now be *ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end?* I flatter myself that but few, if any, of that stamp, will be found, among those, I mean, who would be deemed men of reason, reflection, and self-regard, when they are made to understand

God have *mercy on whom He will have mercy*, and whom he will he may *justly* harden. Then hath the *potter* a *just* power over the *clay of the same lump*, to make one *vessel unto honour*, and *another unto dishonour*. For what if *God willing to shew his wrath*, and to make his *power to be known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction*; that he might make known the *riches of his glory* on the *vessels of mercy*, which he had *afore prepared unto glory?* In other words, what if God, out of a *world lying in wickedness, children of wrath*, alienated from the love of their Maker, contemners of his power, and authority, and under vassalage to his rival, the prince of devils, should *elect*, for a restoration to his favour, upon stipulated terms, whom he should find most deserving of that *partiality*, (which is in reality, no partiality at all, but consistent equity;) reserving for some future trials of obedience, the more notorious offenders against his majesty and honour. A consideration that will make us cease wondering that there should have been heretofore, and that there are still in the *savage parts* of the globe, and too frequently alas, in the *Christian world*, such a number of *demi-devils* in the likeness of *men*, whom we are to consider, as the ruins of original righteousness, as successive memento's of the mischiefs arising from a pre-existent rebellion against God, and objects of the divine wrath. But this is a subject which will be more fully considered hereafter.

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the *real* nature and import of the gospel dispensation, and to view all its doctrines in that rational and consistent light, which by a farther application of the hypothesis above advanced, I hope to enable them to do.

CHAP. X.

The application of the foregoing hypothesis continued.

§ 1. FROM the view which we have already taken of a pre-existent lapse, there opens, to the intellectual eye, an entire consistency in that grand landscape of nature, man's terrestrial abode: a world, which though afflictive in general, and therefore pronounced imperfect, is yet well suited to the degeneracy and corrupted nature of creatures *born in sin*, is calculated extremely well for a state of discipline, and moral improvement; and amidst all its difficulties, dangers, and real distresses, is rendered tolerable, if not altogether eligible, by the comfort of revelations, from time to time made, and assurances therein given, that from hence, if he so deserves, man shall be admitted to a repossession of that blessed mansion above, from which he had been so deservedly banished. *

§ 2.

* We certainly are in a condition, says Dr. *Butler*, which does not seem by any means the most advantageous we could imagine, or desire, (either in our natural or moral capacity,) for securing either our present, or future interest. However, this condition, low, and careful, and uncertain as it is, does not afford any just cause of complaint. For as men may manage their temporal affairs with prudence, and so pass their days

§ 2. The doctrine of a pre-existent lapse of human souls, as above considered, enables us to form clear, and rational conceptions of the introduction of natural and moral evil into the world; of the death of man by the transgression of the first, and his resurrection by the death of the second Adam; and of several other important topics of theology.

First, of the introduction of natural and moral evil into the world:

Upon an exalted scheme of compassion for undone creatures, to introduce into a state of trial, and probation, a select number of the lapsed race, snatched, as it were, from the jaws of the great dragon, and to enable them to recover, if they pleased, their forfeited happiness, was Adam sent into the world in the manner and form described by the sacred historian. And, though created after God's image, i. e. with such intellectual powers and faculties, as are in nature, though not in degree resembling those, by which the infinite and eternal mind is

days here on earth with tolerable ease and satisfaction, by a moderate degree of care, so, likewise with regard to religion, there is no more required, than what they are able to do, and what they must be greatly wanting to themselves, if they neglect. *Butler's anal.* p. 112.

" It is the greatest absurdity and contradiction, to suppose, " that an infinitely wise, and beneficent being, would make " either *sentient*, or *intelligent* beings, suffer, merely for suf- " fering sake. He must have ~~have~~ had just, good, and kind " reasons for thishis *strange work*. And since, it is certain, that " both *sentient* and *intelligent* beings do, and must unavoidably " suffer, and are in a state of punishment, misery, and banishment " here, it necessarily follows, that they are in a state of expia- " tion, purification, and progressive perfection in their respective " orders; and will at last be set free, made happy, and perfect- " ed, and confirm'd in that state for ever. *Omnipotence* surely " *can*, and *infinite goodness*, I hope, *will* do all this."—Cheyne.

governed

govern'd *, yet we find him here accompanied with that inſtability, and depravity of nature, which he had acquir'd by his departure from original rectitude *above*.—And here, if infinite mercy had not interpoſed, the laſt ſtate of man had been worſe than the *firſt*. † My-

* When Moſes ſays, " God created man in his own image," we muſt conſider the image of God in the Old Teſtament notion of it; and it cannot be ſhewn that the image of God in the Old Teſtament, ever ſignifies the divine, *virtuous* image of God. No ſuch notion of it appears in the Old Teſtament, but, on the contrary, mankind conſidered as merely animal, are ſuppoſed to *bear God's image:*

Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed; for in the image of God made he man. Gen. ix. 6.

So alſo in the New Teſtament.

Therewith curſe we men, that are made after the ſimilitude of God, James iii. 9.

For a man ought not to cover his head, foraſmuch as he is the image and glory of God. 1. Cor. xi. 7.

† " Even ſuppoſing, ſays Glanville, that Adam had not " been a delinquent before his noted tranſgreſſion in a terreſ- " trial body, and that his body had vaſt advantages above ours, " in point of beauty, purity, and ſerviceableneſs to the ſoul, " what hardſhip is there in conceiving that God might ſend " one of thoſe *immaculate* ſpirits, that he had made, into ſuch a " tenement, that he might be an overſeer and ruler of thoſe " other creatures, that he had ordered to have their dwelling " upon earth. I am ſure, ſays he, that there is no more contrarie- " ty to any of the divine attributes in this ſuppoſition, than there " is in that, which makes God to have ſent a pure ſpirit, " which he had juſt made into ſuch a body. But then, ſuppo- " ſing that ſome ſouls fell when the angels did, (which he " ſhews to be no unreaſonable ſuppoſition) this was a merciful " proviſion of our Maker, and a generous undertaking for a " ſeraphic and untainted ſpirit. For by this means, fit and con- " gruous *matter* is prepared for ſouls to reſide and act in, " who had rendered themſelves unfit to live and enjoy them- " ſelves in more refined bodies. And ſo thoſe ſpirits that had " ſinned themſelves into a ſtate of ſilence, and inactivity, are " by this reaſonable means, which the divine wiſdom and " goodneſs hath contrived for that purpoſe, put once more in-

" to

Myriads of the fallen race were to iſſue from his loins. He was to introduce them into a new probationary ſcene of action, was to become a kind of ſurety for their after conduct, and in conſequence of a *right behaviour* in all, was to bring them back to their former ſtate of glory. But having, together with the mother of mankind, loſt ſight of his duty to his Maker here, by eating the forbidden fruit, he again fell a ſacrifice to the divine vengeance, and involved his unhappy offſpring in the ruinous conſequence.

Natural and moral evil then flowed in apace. Now it was that *ſin* entered into the *world*, and (that greateſt of *natural* evils, together with its uſual forerunners, bodily pains, infirmities, and gradual decays,) *death* by ſin, ariſing, not improbably, from a malignant efficacy, eſſential to the fruit forbidden. *

So

" to a capacity of acting their parts anew, and coming into " play again. Now if it ſeems hard, continues he, to con- " ceive, how ſo noble a ſpirit, in ſuch an advantageous body, " ſhould have been impoſed upon by ſo groſs a deluſion, and ſub- " mit ſo impotently to the firſt temptation, he may pleaſe to " conſider that the difficulty is the ſame, ſuppoſing him juſt " then to have been made, if we grant him but that purity, " and thoſe perfections, both of will and underſtanding, which " orthodox theology allows him. Yet I might aſk again, " ſays he, what inconvenience there is in ſuppoſing, that A- " dam himſelf was one of thoſe delinquent ſouls, which the " divine pity, and compaſſion, had thus ſet up again; that " ſo many of his excellent creatures might not be loſt, " and undone irrecoverably; but might act anew, though up- " on a lower ſtage, in the univerſe? A due conſideration of " the infinite fœcundity of divine goodneſs, ſays he, will, if " not warrant, yet excuſe ſuch a ſuppoſition."

Vid. *Glanville*'s Lux Orientalis.—pag. 31. 32.

* Before Adam had eaten the forbidden fruit, a divine beauty and majeſty was ſhed upon his body, ſuch as could neither be

So that inſtead of being removed, as was the peculiar indulgence vouchſafed to Enoch and Elijah, by a *direct* tranſlation from earth to the reigon of pure ſpirits, which would have been the caſe, moſt probably, if he, on whom our *terrene* fate depended, had not ſinned *here*. We have now the mortification to find that our paſſage to it muſt be through the dark chambers of the grave, and that through a kind of phyſical neceſſity, the ſame frail periſhable mortal body, which Adam contracted by his tranſgreſſion, deſcending to his poſterity; and nothing but a miraculous interpoſition of divine power, an immediate reſtoration of the protoplaſt's corporeal frame, can prevent this from being the unhappy conſequence. Innocence itſelf is not ſuf-

be eclipſed by ſickneſs, nor extinguiſhed by death; till then he knew no diſeaſe; nature was his phyſician, and innocence and abſtinence would have kept him healthful to immortality. Vid. Stack. hiſt. b. 1. c. 2. p. 37.

Agreeably to which, ſays the author of the book of wiſdom, God created man to be immortal, but through the envy of the devil, death entered into the world. Wiſdom. 23, 24. And again.——By the woman was the beginning of ſin, ſays the wiſe ſon of Sirach, and by her we all die. Eccleſ. 25, 24. By the counſel which the Serpent gave to Eve, all the inhabitants of the earth became obnoxious to death, ſays the Targum, on Ruth, 4. v. ult. And the ſame Chaldee paraphraſe upon Eccleſ. c. 7. v. ult. ſays, God made man pure and upright, but the Serpent and Eve ſeduced him to eat of the fruit of the tree, and ſo they made death to ruſh in upon him, and all the inhabitants of the earth.

It ſeems to be no ill-grounded conjecture of ſome; that the forbidden tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, brought forth a fruit the reverſe of that which was produced by the tree of life. And they take this tree to have been of the nature of that Indian fig deſcribed by Pliny, whoſe fruit was ſweeter than an apple, but of a juice moſt baneful to the human conſtitution; for which reaſon, Alexander, in his expedition gave ſtrict orders that none of his army ſhould touch that fruit. Plin. hiſt. l. 12. c. 6.

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fered to escape being involved in the punishment due only to *guilt*, and the generality of the Christian world are *taught* to believe that the creator stands thoroughly acquitted of injustice in such a permission, by this single consideration,---that, as in *Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made* alive. As if it argued no degree of absurdity or inconsistency in divine providence, to have recourse to and avail himself of the death of him *who knew no sin*, in order to repair the damages the innocent offspring of Adam sustained by his delinquency; a delinquency too which could not but have been foreseen. Notwithstanding which, they ascribe that calamity, *death*, to Adam's transgression, as the *primary* and *sole* cause; when scripture, so agreeably to the dictates of reason and reflection, declares, plainly and positively, that we share that part of the punishment inflicted on Adam's sin, *only* by having been ourselves sinners in a prior state; for what says the apostle? Death passed upon all men, for that, or *because* that (ἐφ' ᾧ eo quod, or as Erasmus renders it, *quatenus*,) all *had* sinned.

§ 3. That this is the true import of the above passage, is evident from the apostle's drift in the whole chapter; which is to amplify, or illustrate the merit of the redemption of the world by Christ. In order, therefore, to obviate any plea, that might perhaps be urged in behalf of the descendants of Adam, as supposed to be innocently, and as such wrongfully involved in the consequences of his guilt, and of course, *intitled* to a redemption from death and destruction; he takes upon him to convince them, that, incapable as they were of incurring the *guilt* for which Adam died, yet, having been *before*, *personally* sinners themselves, they shared, not unjustly, the punishment inflicted on *him*.

As by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, *even ſo* (for that is the true ſenſe of the words, καὶ οὕτως) death paſſed upon all men, foraſmuch as, or becauſe that all had ſinned.

§ 4. The more common tranſlation of this paſſage is arrant nonſenſe.

Wherefore, *as* by one man, ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, and ſo death paſſed upon all men, foraſmuch as all have ſinned.---Well, and what then? Why nothing at all follows to make the ſenſe complete, even allowing a parentheſis to extend as far as you pleaſe. In what ſenſe, then, all *had ſinned*, we learn from the ſcope of the apoſtle's reaſoning throughout the whole chapter.

Doubtleſs one will ſcarce die, ſays he, for a righteous man, i. e. for one, who being *perſonally* righteous, could ſtand in no *need* of a redeemer; yet for a *good man*----one from whom ſome *good* may have been received---it may be that one might even dare to die. *But herein is God's love manifeſted towards us*, ſays he, *in that while we were ſinners*, neither *juſt* nor *good*, (in a ſtate of *original* ſin moſt undoubtedly, for the apoſtles, and other believers in Chriſt, could not be ſuppoſed to be then labouring under a continued courſe of *preſent* ſin) *while we were yet ſinners*, Chriſt died for us. And in order to ſhew, that it was ſome *pre-exiſtent* guilt in man, for which Chriſt died, the apoſtle reaſons as follows.---

§. 5. *Unto the time of the law*, ſays he, *was ſin in the world, but ſin is not imputed while there is no law. But death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them alſo, that ſinned not after the manner of the tranſgreſſion of Adam, who was the figure of him that was to come*, i. e. Sin was in the world prior to the law, [ἄχρι νόμου, *uſque ad Legem*], but to what law? To

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the law given by God to Adam, or to that delivered to Moſes? Not to the latter aſſuredly, becauſe ſin was imputed before the Moſaic law commenced. Witneſs the ſentence of death executed upon Adam, and the ſucceeding race; the puniſhment inflicted on Cain; the deſtruction of the world by a general deluge; the judicial confuſion at the building of the *Tower of Babel*; the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; the fate of *Lot*'s wife; *Simeon*, and *Levi*'s revenge on *Hamor*, and *Shechem* for the rape committed on *Dinah*; and the multiplied judgments on *Pharaoh*, and on the people of the land of *Egypt*.

By the law therefore, prior to which ſin entered into the world, and to which the Apoſtle muſt be ſuppoſed to allude, we muſt undoubtedly underſtand the *law of God given to Adam*. And as the puniſhment for ſin was inflicted even on thoſe, who had not been tranſgreſſors of *that* law, the ſufferers muſt of courſe have been treſpaſſers in a *prior ſtate*, for *ſin is not imputed where there is no law*. But death [the wages of Sin] *reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them* that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion, *who was the image of him, that was to come*. i. e. who by involving *pre-exiſtent* ſinners in the miſeries denounced on his own perſonal tranſgreſſions here, the principal of which is a frail, corruptible, *mortal* body, bore a kind of a contradiſtinct reſemblance of him, who gave them an undeſerved ſhare in the benefits ariſing to mankind by the *merit* of his own perſonal atonement for ſin in general. And ſo it is that---*By man came death*, and that *by man came alſo the reſurrection of the dead*: So it is, that---*As in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*.

§. 6. As the infection of ſin (a pre-exiſtent ſin) remained amongſt the poſterity of Adam, it was

no impeachment of divine juſtice, that death, the *puniſhment* denounced upon his tranſgreſſion, ſhould be tranſmitted to them likewiſe, *all having ſinned.* And that the other intermediate evils (natural evils I mean) ariſe from the ſame ſource, Scripture aſſures us in expreſs terms*.

Curſed is the ground for his ſake; in ſorrow do we eat of it, more or leſs, *all the days of our life; thorns alſo, and thiſtles it brings forth; and we eat of the herb of the field; in the ſweat of our brow* † *we eat bread, till we return to the ground; for out of it we were taken. Duſt we are, and unto duſt we muſt return.* And it was not mankind only which felt the ſad effects of the introduction of ſin, but even the inanimate part of the creation ſuffered by it. The

* " It is evident, that evil ought to be prevented if " it be poſſible, and that it is a ſinful thing not to prevent " it when it can be prevented. Nevertheleſs our theology " ſhews us, that this is falſe; it teaches us, that God does no- " thing but what becomes his perfections, when he permits all " the diſorders that are in the world, and which he might " have prevented." This is part of a conference between two Abbots which Mr. Bayle introduces into his Account of the Life of Pyrrho; wherein a reflection is caſt upon the Deity, in permitting the introduction and continuance of evil in the world, which is ſufficiently removed, by ſuppoſing it the reſult of a pre-exiſtent lapſe.

† Some conclude from hence, that the earth, before the fall, brought forth ſpontaneouſly; and indeed this, in ſome meaſure, is true, ſince all things were produced at firſt, by divine power, in full perfection, without toil or labour. Gen. i. 11. 12. But what labour would have been neceſſary in time, we know not, only the words imply, that much leſs toil would in that caſe have been requiſite. See Patr. in Loco. Other commentators obſerve, that by the ſweat of our brow is underſtood, all manner of labour, whether of the body or the brain. Eccleſ. i. 13. As alſo, whatſoever is grievous to a man in this life, either to do or ſuffer. See aſſembly of divines in Loco.

fertility

fertility of the earth, and ſerenity of the air were changed; the elements began to jar, the ſeaſons, and the weather grew uncertain. See Stack. hiſt. p. 43. Milton * introduces God ſoon after the fall, appointing his Angels to make an alteration in the courſe of the celeſtial bodies, and to poſſeſs them with noxious qualities, in order to deſtroy the fertility of the earth, and thereby puniſh man for his diſobedience.

§ 7. Thus through Adam's tranſgreſſion, the introduction of natural evil is made reconcileable with our ideas of infinite equity and wiſdom; we ſhall ſee now, how neceſſarily *moral* evil iſſued from the ſame ſource.

The Jews ſuppoſed, that the body of Adam, before the fall, was not an ordinary human body, but approached to the angelic ſubtility and purity. *Creatura fuit ſubtiliſſima & puriſſima proxime accedens ad Corpus ſpirituale* See Brok. p. 464.

But this tenuous vehicle of the ſoul, after having imbibed the baneful juice of the forbidden fruit, degenerated by degrees, into a more groſs and indelicate conſiſtency; whence a group of ſenſual groveling appetites *unuſual*, aroſe of courſe. And as the degenerate nature of Adam's body becomes neceſſarily hereditary to us, who are his offſpring, ſo in proportion muſt its concomitant groſs *paſſions* become hereditary too: *Hence that law in*

—— —— —— * The ſun
Had firſt his precept ſo to move, ſo ſhine,
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
Decrepit Winter, from the ſouth to bring
Solſtitial ſummer's heat.——

MIL. L. X. 651.

our members, warring againſt the law of our mind *, *and bringing us into captivity to the law of ſin*; hence that *carnal mind, which is enmity againſt God.* Our ſouls are now cloathed with bodies calculated to adminiſter ſuch affections *only*, as are repugnant to, and incompatible with that purity of mind, to which a *ſpiritual* life only can enable us to attain, and wherein only it is poſſible for us to pleaſe God. This is that life, which Adam forfeited by his tranſgreſſion, and his poſterity ſink in the ruins of it. Hence it is, that we are ſtill dead in treſpaſſes, and ſins; that in the midſt of life we are in death. The glory of the divine image, *before* eclipſed, is *now* more and more clouded, and obſcured by carnal luſts, and paſſions; the ſoul is, as it were, buried in ſinful fleſh, and totally unable to riſe again to its *original* ſplendor, till this *corruptible* ſhall have put on *incorruption*, and this *mortal* ſhall have put on *immortality* †.

§ 8. And as, from the nature of that body which we inherit from Adam, in conſequence of his fall, we are thrown under the dominion of luſts, and

* Hence it is, that in our form of infant baptiſm, the prieſt ſo devoutly prays, "that the *old Adam* in *that* child may be ſo "buried, that the *new* man may be raiſed up in him."

† I cannot think, with the learned Mr. *Law*, that this perfection of ſoul is at all attainable *here*. Scripture ſpeaks evidently a contrary doctrine. *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh*, ſays our Saviour; and of courſe (while it continues in the ſame ſtate) is ſinful, i. e. is liable to ſuch paſſions, as neceſſarily ſubject it to the law of ſin---that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit, i. e. it is pure, uncorrupt, ſinleſs: but ſuch are not we. We are *altogether abominable, there is none that doth good, no, not one.* He that is of the earth, is earthy, and ſpeaketh of the earth. And as fleſh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, ſo neither can righteouſneſs be reſtored to us *here*: for

and paſſions, repugnant to the efforts of ſtruggling piety; ſo are we neceſſarily ſubjected thereby to the controul of that laſt enemy, that ſhall be deſtroyed, death. Inſtead of being tranſlated, as was the happy indulgence granted to *Enoch*, &c. by a direct paſſage from earth to a region purer, and better accommodated to ſpiritual intercourſes and enlargements, which moſt probably had been vouchſafed us, if he on whom our *terreſtrial fate* depended, had not ſinned afreſh; we have now the mortification to find, that we muſt walk to it through the dark chambers of the grave *.

§ 9. That *condemnation* to death, which God paſſed upon Adam for his diſobedience, became *hereditary* to his whole offspring, and would have been *fixed*, and *irreverſible*, but that---*As in Adam*

for the King of righteouſneſs himſelf has declared, that his kingdom is not from *hence*; nay, and if we do all we can, it is peremptorily affirmed, that we are ſtill *unprofitable ſervants*. And if perfection was actually to be acquired *here*, how happened it, that the *converted* apoſtle could not become poſſeſſed of it? How came it, that there was ſtill that law in his members, warring, &c. and bringing him into captivity to the law of ſin? How, laſtly, came it to paſs, that humanity got the better, *for a time*, over even the divinity of Chriſt---that he was for giving up the cauſe, for which he came into the world---was *deſirous*, that, if poſſible, the cup might paſs from him; intimating in the very act of reſignation to his approaching fate, that he was led to it, not by his *own will*, but by the *will of his Father*---not *my will*, ſays he, but *thine* be done.

* The ancient fathers, and many other writers, think, that the tree of life, of which Adam was forbid taſting after his fall, was ſo called, becauſe it had a virtue in it, not only to repair the animal ſpirits, but alſo to maintain them, and all the organs of the body, without decay, till man ſhould have been fit to be tranſlated into another world. And that there was ſuch a vivific, life-giving virtue in the fruit of this tree, is intimated, Gen. iii. 22.---*Leſt he put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.* Vid. Patr. in Loco.

all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,---shall, by the all-sufficient merits of him who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, through faith in his blood, and the added efficacy of a well-spent life, rise to the life immortal, enter into the joy of our Lord, and be restored at length to the favour of God, which we had forfeited by our *prior* personal trespasses, and sins, and on account of which we were made *sharers* in the penalty inflicted on Adam, viz. death.

§ 10. Agreeably to which, says the apostle, "As by the offence of one, judgement came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The apostle's meaning in these passages will sufficiently appear, by attending to the force of the assertion, in the words---*By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

Here---to be made righteous evidently signifies, to be treated, dealt with as, or placed in the light of * righteous persons, though actual offenders at the same time. For the Son of God having, while here on earth, fulfilled all righteousness (of which the most eminent, and meritorious instance was, his becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, in compliance with his Father's will, and in order to accomplish the redemption of mankind) God the Father was

* Κατεστάθησαν constituti sunt. When God is represented as saying, "Let us *make* man in our image," Gen. i. 26. the word made use of by the LXX is ποιήσωμεν.

pleased

pleaſed to impute this *perfect* obedience of that *one* man, the *ſecond Adam*, to the whole race of mankind, as an atonement for all their prior treſpaſſes; as compleat, and ſatisfactory to his juſtice, as if they had fulfilled *all righteouſneſs* by ſome perſonal merit in themſelves. Thus, I ſay, and thus only it is true, that, *by the obedience of one, many were made righteous.* And as this bears an analogical reference to what is aſſerted in the words immediately preceding, viz. that *by one man's diſobedience many were made ſinners*, the ſame figurative interpretation muſt of courſe be put on both. When the apoſtle therefore ſays, that---" by one man's " diſobedience many were made ſinners," he undoubtedly means, that God was pleaſed ſo far to impute the tranſgreſſion of that one man, the *firſt Adam*, to his whole poſterity, as to deal with them univerſally in ſuch a manner, as if they had all been *partakers* with him in the very act *. And the reaſon why God proceeded againſt them in a manner ſo ſeemingly rigorous, and unreaſonable, the apoſtle had given above.

Wherefore as by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, even ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that, or becauſe that all had [ἥμαρτον] ſinned †.

§ 11. Thus

* To be made ſin, and to be made ſinners, we may conſider as ſynonimous expreſſions; therefore, if to be made ſinners, means here the transferring the guilt of Adam's ſin to us, ſo as that upon that very account we become obnoxious to the *wrath of God*, who can ſay, that in the bleſſed Jeſus there *was no ſin*, ſince he was *made ſin* for us?

† That ἥμαρτον refers to ſins independent of Adam's tranſgreſſion *here*, the apoſtle evinces, by obſerving, in the next verſe but one—that death (the conſequence of ſin) reigned *even*

§ 11. Thus we see how insufficient the above passages are to warrant a belief, that original sin, that sin with which we are *born into the world*, by which we are rendered objects of the divine wrath, and indignation, and the guilt of which the blood of the blessed *Jesus* only could expiate, takes its rise from the guilt of *Adam*, and not from a pre-existent lapse.

§ 12. We have here likewise a true and rational account of the introduction of natural and moral evil * into this world. Natural evil is apparently the offspring of *moral*, and the latter the unhappy pro-

over them, that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression—καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς μὴ ἁμαρτήσαντας ἐπὶ τῷ ὁμοιώματι τῆς παραβάσεως Ἀδάμ. But if we suppose the word ἥμαρτον to refer to crimes not *prior*, but *subsequent* to the sentence passed upon Adam's transgression, the apostle's assertion is manifestly this, viz. Death passed upon all men on account of Adam's sin, *because* all have sinned *since*. Τίς ἥμαρτεν οὗτος ἢ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῇ—say the Jews to our Saviour:—in our English translation thus; who did sin, this Man, or his parents, that he was born blind? The sense of which question manifestly is; who had sinned, this man, or, &c. Now ἥμαρτον in the *preceding* passage, being of the same tense with ἥμαρτεν in this πάντες ἥμαρτον may, with critical propriety, be rendered—all *had* sinned.

* The origin of evil, says Brocklesby, has a remarkable congruity in the Mosaic history; and it is, in the general nature of it, unexceptionable. For it derives the evil of punishment from the evil of sin; and the evil of sin—from the beginner of sin, the devil.

Through envy of the devil (quem sub serpentis figurâ Moses intelligi voluit, says *Grotius*) came death into the world. And *Pherecydes Syrus* derives his ὄφιωνεὺς, princeps mali, as Origen thinks, from the Mosaic account of the serpent. And *Plato* is supposed to derive from thence his Story of *Jupiter*'s Gardens; and of *Porus* circumvented by *Penia*. Vid. C. Cels. l. 6. p. 304. Item. l. 4. p. 114. Euseb. præpar. Evang. l. 12. c. 11.

If it be still said, that the origin of evil is not yet sufficiently ascertained by my hypothesis, the supposed lapse above-mentioned not being accounted for, I must refer the reader to some notes and remarks on the nature of free agency, in chapter 7.

duct,

duct, not of Adam's trespass, as its *primary* or *sole* cause, but of a personal pre-existent guilt in all who are derived from him. And how consistent throughout appears, to the intellectual eye, from this view of things, that grand landscape of nature, man's terrestrial abode!

§ 13. The advantages which a supposed pre-existent lapse of human souls suggests, are as follows:

In the first place, it affords a striking memorial of the calamitous effects of sin, and impiety in general, and of the heinousness of those prior offences from whence are derived to us the evils consequent on Adam's sin in particular.

§ 14. They are, in the second place, proper medicines to heal our spiritual sickness, to correct the peccant humours in our intellectual and moral frame, to check the impetuosity of our inflamed and unruly appetites, and reduce us to a cool and consistent knowledge of ourselves, and our unhappy condition.

§ 15. When, in the third place, it is remembered, that we come into this world, as objects of the divine wrath, for some pre-existent acts of rebellion against heaven, will it be wondered, if we feel, now and then, a stroke from the rod of *justice*; or that the state into which we are banished for those crimes should be prolific of corrective difficulties, anxieties, and actual grievances?

Thus much for the advantages derived to mankind from the introduction of natural and moral evil into the world; and the consistency of divine providence, in suffering them to fall here under the devil's power, is, I think, equally evident.

§ 16. When it shall be considered, that creatures, before basking in the beams of celestial glory, nay and even enjoying

—Their

——— ——— ——Their fill
Of bliſs on bliſs——— ——— —
Imparadiſed in ſocial joys, dropp'd gratitude;

that in contempt of the laws of juſtice, generoſity, and moral equity, they proſtituted that freedom of will, with which they were entruſted by their Maker, to a *reſolute* revolt to the traiterous rival of his power and dignity, and fixed their allegiance *there*---who does not ſee the wiſdom of divine providence in conſtituting him who had been their ſeducer in a prior world, their king or potentate in this? that ſo by rendering his *permitted ſovereignty* here ineffectual for accompliſhing any thing but his and their own ruin, the vanity of his ambitious enterpriſes, and of their own truſt and confidence in him, might be render'd more conſpicuous. To which nothing could have contributed more, than the pre-ordained *late* appearance of the *Meſſiah* among men, to reſcue them from the devil's power, and the multiplied miſeries iſſuing from it.

§ 17. For in the firſt place, mankind having by this means more time to reflect on the wretchedneſs of their lapſed condition; and by a long experience ſeeing their own inſufficiency to ſatisfy the divine juſtice, to cleanſe themſelves from their contracted pollutions, or regain their forfeited freedom, they of courſe became more and more convinced of the neceſſity of a Redeemer, ſome more than human Redeemer, to reſtore them to themſelves, to reconcile them to their offended God, and to reſcue them from the power of Satan, who had reigned for many ages together over the generality of mankind with an abſolute ſway---*blinding their minds, and working in the children of diſobedience*---and not only this, but invading their paſſive bodies (as we before obſerved) and torment-

ing

ing them at his cruel pleaſure. If then the Redeemer had been ſent into the world ſoon after the fall of Adam, or within an age or two after the flood, and checked by that means the devil's controul in its infancy, the manifeſtation of divine power in ſuch a conqueſt, and of conſequence the glory ariſing from it, had been abundantly leſs conſiderable, than they afterwards were, when---*in the laſt days the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the devil.*---I ſay, in the *laſt days*, when the prince of darkneſs had ſo *widely* extended his dominions, and continued robbing the King of heaven of almoſt all his ſubjects, in every province of his empire here below, excepting that of *Paleſtine* (nor was that totally exempt from Satanic ſway) at ſuch a juncture, as this, when the apoſtacy of mankind became ſo conſpicuous and univerſal here, it was evidently moſt for the glory of God to aſſert his rightful ſovereignty, to pull down the uſurped empire of his rival, the prince of the apoſtate powers, and reſcue a captive world (in themſelves helpleſs, and hopeleſs, and yet deſirous at the ſame time of a deliverance) from the tyranny and oppreſſion of their ſpiritual enemies, whom they had *before* ſo ungardedly careſſed, as friends.

§ 18. If, in the ſecond place, the Redeemer had come earlier into the world, than he did, men might have been tempted to regard the Almighty, as leſs provoked by their prior apoſtacy and rebellion, or more placable, condeſcending, and eaſy to be entreated, than might well comport with, either his infinite purity, holineſs, and juſtice, or with his dignity, majeſty, and honour *.

§ 19. And

* If it ſhould be urged, that theſe reflections would hold equally good, upon a ſuppoſed *imputed* guilt from Adam, as from

§ 19. And if there is so great a part of the human race, to whom the arm of the Lord is not yet revealed, men, who still sit in darkness, on whom not a single ray of the light of the gospel has as yet shined; and who, being *unregenerate*, are of course under the dominion of the powers of darkness, with what an advantage does the gospel dispensation appear? With what additional majesty and lustre does the sun of righteousness emerge, as it were, out of an Egyptian darkness? And who is so insensible of the blessings resulting from that *light*, as not to learn, from such a contrasted view of things, to prize more highly, to acknowledge with greater gratitude, and to covet, and embrace more ardently the great blessings of the gospel dispensation?

Are *they* borne down by the torrent of impetuous and unruly appetites, essential to *unregenerate* nature, hurried into enormities and savage cruelties, at the bare mention of which civilized humanity is shocked, and can scarce consider as the deeds of *men?* How inestimably great * is our happiness, to whom are proposed the gospel terms of salvation; by a sincere and cordial acceptance of which we are renewed in the *spirit of our minds*, are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of *Satan* unto *God*, are furnished with the

from a pretended *pre-existent* transgression, I will allow that they would, when I can be convinced that there is no *difference*, whether it be on the one account or on the other, that the world *lies in wickedness* and under the *power of the devil*; or, that the *forbearing* to release men from miseries in which they became involved by no crime of their own, can upon any consideration whatever, be made reconcileable with our usual ideas of infinite goodness, mercy, and justice.

* The natural efficacy and real importance of which will be shewn in the second part.

whole

whole armour of God, and enabled therewith to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil; to combat the outrageous appetites of degenerate nature, and regain our loſt intereſt with God? And how great, in proportion, muſt be the *folly*, as well as *ingratitude* of thoſe, who have their portion in the *Chriſtian* world, and yet neglect ſo great ſalvation? Is it not reaſonable to expect, that the fate of ſuch as *reject* the means of ſalvation will, hereafter, be more terrible than theirs, to whom they ſhall *not* have been *propoſed*? Nay, do we not ſee how, by doing deſpite to the Spirit of *grace*, they fall daily into impieties, extravagances, and *capital* offences, little, if at all inferior to the flagitious practices of the heathen world? And ſuch muſt be the caſe of thoſe, who truſt to morality, to a morality, I mean, excluſive of Chriſtianity. *Do juſtly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God*, was a rule of life propoſed---to whom? To a Chriſtian? No; to one who had no other path to walk in, but what he was directed to purſue by the laws of moral rectitude, *devoid* of Chriſtian obligations. Can ſuch inſtruction then be deemed, in reaſon, a *ſufficient* directory to him, whoſe *ſuperadded* duties are a lively and *operative* faith in his Saviour and Redeemer, Chriſt? Is not Chriſtianity a late voice from *God*, and when proved to be ſuch (which I muſt be allowed here to ſuppoſe) a *freſh* call upon his morality? Can, then, the *moral man*, when, and where Chriſtianity is revealed, exiſt ſeparately from the *Chriſtian?* And if Chriſtianity bids us keep clear of impieties, and ſenſualities, does not morality do the ſame? And when Chriſtianity comes to aid us in the diſcharge of moral obligations, is it not on that account, if on no other, worthy of all acceptation? That without ſuch aid, man, degenerated from original rectitude, is not able to

act

act up to the dignity of a *moral* being, the experience of ages past, of the present pagan world, and of either the perverse and abandoned, or the self-conceited, half-reasoning infidels amongst ourselves, evinces. And if, besides that, a reliance on the mediatorial redemption only, can exculpate us from the guilt of our prior trespasses, how ineffectual must of course be an independent morality, to restore us to that favour of God, and future happiness, of which they have rendered us unworthy?

And now (to dwell a little longer on the above reflection) what will those mortals have to plead for their folly, a folly, not to call it worse, with which I had almost said the generality of the *politer* world is chargeable; who, after having been initiated into the privileges of the gospel dispensation at their birth, by baptism, manifest a kind of contemptuous disregard to, if not an open disavowal of this sacred, solemn, soul-reviving institution, all their lives after? Do they enough consider---most assuredly they do not---that there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby *they* must be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ? If there be any dispute, how far the heathen moralists, or those of the pagan world in general, to whom the gospel has not yet been revealed *, will be benefitted by the atonement made for original trespasses by Christ, there can be none with respect to those who, after having been from day to day called upon, cordially and with sincerity, to accept, either wilfully reject, or carelessly neglect to embrace the mighty blessing? Shall men

* This is a point that will be fully considered in the second part.

be

be affectionately invited to enter with *Chriſt into his kingdom* upon the ſtipulated terms of a firm faith in his merits; of faith, actuated and enlivened by as conſcientious a diſcharge of the duties of Chriſtianity, as the infirmities of human nature will admit? is, in ſhort, the kingdom of heaven and of Chriſt, that haven of happineſs to which any of us would wiſh to arrive, and ſhall we preſumptuouſly engage to get thither by the way *we* ſhall pleaſe to chalk out to ourſelves---through the bewildering labyrinths of *meer* morality, regardleſs all along of the voice of Him who has declared, and ſufficiently proved, that He only is the *way*, and the *truth*, and the *light*; and that no one cometh unto the *Father* but *through* him? Surely no.

To whatever place, in fact, man's boaſted morality (the *meer* morality of one, I mean, to whom Chriſtianity has been revealed) to whatever place, I ſay, his boaſted morality may give him a paſſport in an hereafter, certain it is, that it will not entitle him, if not ſtampt with the ſeal of Chriſtianity, to an entrance into *Chriſt's kingdom*. If therefore the heretofore *inconſiderate* ſhall be brought to a perſuation (as by but a moment's ſerious application of reaſon and reflection, they moſt undoubtedly will) that that kingdom of Chriſt is a place of bliſs, worth their aſpiring after, let them not *fail* to take into their conſideration, at the ſame time, the following awful declaration of our Saviour, more applicable, if poſſible, to the Chriſtian world now, than to thoſe towhom it was at firſt directed. Whoſoever, ſays he, ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words---of him alſo ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels. Mar. viii. 38.

If

If, in ſhort, a man would be wiſe---wiſe, I mean, unto ſalvation, let the Chriſtian profeſſion be his ſtudy, his delight, his pride; aſſuring himſelf, that *therein only* lies an *unqueſtioned* ſecurity for future happineſs. And yet, I would not have him think, that in order to become Chriſtian, he muſt inſtantly commence Cynic, and treat with a ſour ſeverity *thoſe* innocent gratifications of ſenſe and fancy, which nature and art afford; and to which his circumſtances and ſituation in life give him a title. They are ſo many neceſſary reliefs from the cares and anxieties attendant on our pilgrimage here, which it is Stoic-madneſs to conſider as ſinful, or as enemies to the ſoul's welfare, if they happen not to have for their object ſomething devotional.

Let him not fail on any account to turn his eye and ear from every thing that bears but the leaſt affinity to impiety, indecency, or obſcenity; and gravity and gaity may at times ſhake hands; he may, with no impropriety, welcome ſong and welcome jeſt, provided it can be done with diſcretion enough not to drop dignity.

To this reflection nothing can be more pertinent than the following advice, given by a moſt ingenious *female* writer to her ſon.

" Be careful," ſays ſhe, " whilſt you profeſs a " religion which deſerves the moſt ſerious vene- " ration, there be nothing in your particular man- " ner of exerciſing it, that may give juſt cauſe for " ridicule. Avoid all ſingularity, preciſeneſs, or " ſourneſs. Be not apt to cenſure ſuch as do not " obſerve the rules you preſcribe yourſelf; and " freely join in a moderate uſe of the diverſion prac- " tiſed among thoſe you converſe with, if they are " not unlawful in themſelves, or directly lead to " what is ſo. The eaſier religion ſits upon you,

" the

" the ſecurer it will be from the banters of the " profane, and the more recommend itſelf to the " imitation of your young companions; for no- " thing alienates the mind from religion in that " gay time of life (and I will add, in every ſub- " ſequent ſtage of it) or rather gives a diſguſt to " it, ſo much as too great auſterity of manners in " thoſe who profeſs it*.

The reader, I fear, will think I have digreſſed from the propoſed ſubject of the preſent chapter; for which digreſſion, ſuppoſing there be one, I can only expect forgiveneſs, upon a preſumption, that it is not altogether uninſtructive.

§ 20. Another advantage accruing from the foregoing doctrine, is, that we may, not only account for the exalted *dignity* and *merit* aſcribed in ſcripture to a true faith in Chriſt, but with the utmoſt eaſe aſcertain, likewiſe, the *real*, *redemptional* efficacy and importance of *faith* †, and *good works*, ſeparately, and reſpectively; and prove inconteſtibly, how totally unattainable *juſtification* is by the latter.

Is it not the language of ſcripture, and of Chriſtianity, that, during our *unregeneracy here*, we are in a ſtate of continued enmity and rebellion againſt God; ſtill a kind of liege ſubjects to the prince of the apoſtate powers? Is it not at the ſame time equally evident, that God, in his wrath, thinketh upon mercy, that he is *in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf*, *not imputing their treſpaſſes—that they may be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*; that we may receive *the free gift of many offences unto*

* Vid. Mrs. Cockburn's Works.

† I mean, that belief in Jeſus Chriſt, which is the very baſis of Chriſtianity.

justification—being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus? And what are the conditions on our part, required by the gospel dispensation, to secure to us the mighty blessing? Is there not, in reality, only *one*, and that an actual, cordial, unreserved *faith in Christ?* Most assuredly there is. Did not God so love the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life? John iii. 16. Are not the actions of our Saviour recorded—that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that *believing*, we might have life through his Name? John xx. 31. And what says the apostle to the Romans? If thou shalt confess, says he, with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe* in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Rom. x. 9. And, again —*By the deeds of the law*, says he, *there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.*

But now the *righteousness of God without the law* is manifested, *being witnessed by the law and the prophets*; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of (in) Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Whom God hath set forth (or as the marginal reading rightly words it, *foreordained*) to be a propitiation through *faith in his blood*, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, that are past, through the forbearance of God.

To declare, I say, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

Now

Now, can any thing be more plainly the ſenſe of the preceding paſſages, than that we are *juſtified*, or cleared from the guilt of original ſin, reſtored to the forfeited favour and affection of God, and reſcued from the power and dominion of ſin and ſatan, wholely and ſolely by a true faith in Chriſt? Is there a ſingle word throughout, about *works?* Not a ſyllable. And how inefficacious they are, and muſt be, for effecting the *juſtification* here alluded to, or that which is the ſubject of the goſpel œconomy, and the very *price of our redemption*, will be ſhewn through the medium of pre-exiſtence, with a clearneſs, that cannot but ſtrike conviction upon the moſt partial and unwilling eye.

§ 21. The new, or mediatorial œconomy, eſtabliſhed by the author of our ſalvation, is frequently ſtiled in ſcripture, the kingdom *of God*, and that partly, if not principally, in contradiſtinction to the kingdom of *ſatan*. This is plainly intimated in our Saviour's anſwer to his enemies, who traduced him as an impoſtor, and as one who was in confederacy with *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils. *If ſatan*, ſays he, *caſt out ſatan, he is divided againſt himſelf; how then ſhall his kingdom ſtand?*

But if I caſt out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Matt. xii. 26. 28.

In which paſſage Chriſt and ſatan are repreſentd as rival princes, poſſeſſed of kingdoms inconſiſtent with, and deſtructive of each other.

To the ſame purpoſe is that parable in St. *Luke*, of a ſtrong man in his palace overcome by a ſtronger than he. Luke xi. 21, 22. And that other, wherein the kingdom of heaven is likened to a man, that ſowed good ſeed in the field, but while he ſlept, his enemy came, and ſowed tares among the

wheat. Matt. xiii. 24. &c. Agreeably to all which, St. Paul obſerves to the Corinthians, that there is no concord betwixt *Chriſt* and *Belial*. If to the above paſſages we add St. *John*'s declaration, that for this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the devil, and, that St. *Paul* ſuppoſes *all* men in general, in their *natural unregenerate* ſtate I mean, to walk accordcording to the *prince of the power of the air*—Vid. my critique on Epheſians, c. ii. v. 2. 3. It is evident, that he who is our *Redeemer* comes with the delegated authority *of a king*, to aſſert his Father's right to an uncontrouled, unoppoſed ſovereignty over the univerſe; to pull down, and evacuate the uſurped empire of the devil in this inferior world, and to reſcue mankind from his oppreſſion, by turning them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of ſatan unto God—and *that* by offering them peace with their offended God, and pardon for that paſt aſſociation with the prince of darkneſs, which my hypotheſis ſuppoſes on the ſtipulated conditions of a ſincere, unſhaken *fidelity* to Him, the appointed captain of our ſalvation. Till, then, we have diſavowed our *attachment* to the prince of darkneſs, and ſworn allegiance to the Lord of life, there ſtill hangs over our heads, for our *prior* diſloyalty, the rod of vengeance; ſtill we are objects of the divine wrath; and be our *moral* accompliſhments ever ſo many, and great, we are, and muſt be upon the liſt of rebels ſtill. Our *attainder* muſt be taken off, ere we can be readmitted into the glorious liberty of the ſons and ſubjects of God. And in this conſiſts our *juſtification*; which replaceth us before the eye of the Deity, in the ſame favourable and auſpicious point of view, wherein we ſtood, when poſſeſſed of that original righteouſneſs, and moral rectitude,

tude, by a departure from which we became rebels to the king of heaven; and, in consequence thereof, are now banished his divine presence. Herein consists that righteousness of God, which is---by what? By *good works?* Is it not by *faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe,?* And our *justification*---is it in the least degree effected by the merit of *good works?* is it not accomplished wholly, and solely through *the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*, and through faith in his blood? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God, that justifieth †; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ, that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

§ 22. Justification therefore, being supposed to respect that pre-existent defilement of our nature, and rebellion against God with which we come into this world, and which is now our condemnation; is it possible that any *present*, or *future* acts of purity, piety, and obedience in us, can render that *condemnation*, which is for some prior acts of impurity, impiety, and disobedience, no *condemnation?* Can all the sorrowful sighings of prisoners, under sentence of death for rebellion against a temporal king, any suitable, decent, amiable acts *then* take away the guilt of those *prior* crimes, for which they forfeited their lives? If they are pardoned, and restored afterwards to their prince's favour, by the intercession of his Son, pledging *his* life for their future fidelity, need we ask to whom they are indebted both for *their* life and their liberty? Come they not from the free grace of the one, and thro' the mediation, and intercession of the other? Could

† That is, who through Christ, *accepts* us as just, by our faith and reliance on *his* mediation, intercession, &c.

the criminals plead, with any ſhew of reaſon, from any ſubſequent deeds, a *right* to be exempt from the puniſhment due to their *paſt* criminalities ?

§ 23. Juſtification, conſidered in this view, as a releaſe, I mean, from the guilt of a prior, perſonal impiety, and diſobedience againſt God, inſtead of a *derived* Adamic guilt and defilement, how greatly does it exalt the dignity and merits aſcribed in ſcripture to a true faith in Chriſt, at the ſame time that it enables us the more clearly to adjudge to *faith* and *good works* the regards due to their reſpective efficacy in accompliſhing man's redemption. The two apoſtles differed in that point only in appearance; and whilſt the one, with great truth, aſſerted, that the works of the law ceaſed to have any ſhare in the juſtification of the elect *chriſtianized* Jew, ſo circumſtanced, and ſo conſidered; the other with equal propriety declared, that faith alone could not render *worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called*, the *converted* Gentile. Men muſt become *Chriſtians* to be juſtified, or cleared from the imputation of their original ſins and treſpaſſes, and to be *conſiſtent* Chriſtians, they muſt become *good men*. How apparently then is faith in Chriſt *alone* neceſſary for the firſt, and how evidently eſſential are good works for the latter ? And how conſiſtent altogether with each other are the two apoſtles † ! And when the *Methodiſts* ſay, that

† How conſiſtent altogether with each other are the two apoſtles—To clear up this point, be pleaſed to attend to the following note.

Introductory to the final ſtate of bliſs, reſerved for the *ſincere* profeſſors of Chriſtianity, will be an entrance into Chriſt's kingdom; the two prime fundamental requiſites for which privilege are, *juſtification* and *ſanctification*—or true holineſs. By the former

that all our *moral* works, independent of *Chriſtian renovation*, are unavailable to *juſtification*, or to clear us from *original* ſin, how apparently do they ſpeak a ſcripture doctrine? And all they err in is their aſcribing, upon the authority of eſtabliſhed orthodoxy, as it is called, that original guilt (by which at our birth we became objects of the divine wrath and indignation) to the tranſgreſſion of another perſon---to fallen Adam; which can with no

former we are to underſtand an *abſolution* from the penalty of original guilt and defilement, obtained wholely and ſolely by a firm faith in, or reliance on the all-ſufficient merits of Chriſt, who died for our ſins, and roſe again for our juſtification. By the latter, that acquiſition of moral purity and holineſs, which the goſpel enjoins, and without which, the apoſtle informs us, no man ſhall ſee the Lord.

This being admitted, the perplexed diſpute, whether faith with or without works can be available to our juſtification, drops at once, as the queſtion ſhould rather be, whether they are ſeparately effectual to our *ſalvation*, or not? And in this there can be no *rational* diſpute. That we are *juſtified*, i. e. cleanſed from the guilt of original ſin by a firm faith in Chriſt, independent of any merit in ourſelves, or of good works, we have reiterated declarations from holy writ; but then, in order to render that *juſtification* effectual to our *final ſalvation*, introductory to which will be an entrance into Chriſt's kingdom *, we muſt add to our faith, works—muſt walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called— muſt cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and the ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God—knowing this, that without a true goſpel repentance, added to the applied merits of our Saviour, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves with mankind, nor railers, nor extortioners, ſhall enter into the kingdom of God. Men, in ſhort, are wont to place *juſtification* and man's final *ſalvation* in one and the ſame point of view, as if they were in reality one and the ſame thing, or that the one naturally, and of neceſſity lead to the other; which is not the caſe. For the apoſtle, St. Paul,

* The nature of that kingdom will be conſidered in the ſecond part.

no degree of propriety, nor with any warrantable conceptions of the divine attributes, if, without even blaſphemy, be aſcribed to aught elſe, but to our own perſonal treſpaſſes in a prior ſtate. And all this error of theirs is grounded wholly and ſolely on a wrong conſtruction of the two following paſſages in St. *Paul*'s epiſtles. " As by one " man's diſobedience many were made ſinners, ſo " by the obedience of one ſhall many be made " righteous." " As in Adam all die, even ſo in " Chriſt ſhall all be made alive." Theſe paſſages we have briefly touched upon already, ſufficiently, however, to convince the impartial, that they give no warrant to ſuppoſe, that original ſin, that ſin, I mean, of which we ſtand *charged*, nay, and even *convicted* at our birth, conſiſts in an *imputed* iniquity from *Adam*. God forbid that they ſhould be *proved*, to proclaim to the world ſo prepoſterous, and horrid a doctrine!

§ 24. That the miſeries of our natural unregenerate ſtate, not the loſs of God's favour only, but an actual exertion of his wrath and indignation upon us, our alienation from God and goodneſs,

plainly ſuppoſes, that thoſe who have been once enlightened —ἅπαξ φωτισθέντας † —have embraced the Chriſtian faith—obtaining thereby a juſtification from origigal ſin, and had taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt—He ſuppoſes, I ſay, that ſuch may fall back into perdition.

Should there be any weight in the above obſervations, I doubt not but the impartial reader will at once ſee, and generouſly confeſs, how egregiouſly wide of *ſcripture verity* the churchman, in a modern well-received treatiſe, reaſons ‡.

† The Greek fathers ſometimes call φωτισμὸν baptiſmum, and φωτίζω, baptizo; ſince thoſe who are baptiſed with the Holy Ghoſt, have their minds enlightened or illuſtrated with the beams of divine light. Vid. Leigh's Crit. Sac. in Loco.

‡ A dialogue between a Churchman and a Methodiſt. By Wm. Law. A. M.

and

and propenſity to vice and impiety, added to the multiplied calamities of a world; which, taking in all its fancied excellencies, and advantages, its riches and honours, and powers, and pre-eminces, and glittering glories, is, at beſt, but a fool's paradiſe---That ſuch ſhould be the wretched condition of man, and merely in conſequence of a crime that he had it not in his power either to commit or prevent; is this, I ſay, credible? Is it poſſible †? And when it is further conſidered, that nothing leſs than the blood of the Son of God could atone for, or waſh away the ſtain of this *imputed* guilt, who but muſt fire with pious indignation at ſuch an impious outrage upon human underſtanding? And how neceſſary is it, as we value the credit, and would wiſh the moſt ſpeedy and extenſive propagation of the goſpel, to clear the ſacred pages from the charge of advancing a doctrine ſo abhorrent to reaſon and calm reflection! This only can enable us to convince unbelievers, that Chriſtianity is in reality founded on argument; then, and not till then, ſhall we be able to approve our faith to the underſtanding of the rational enquirer, and free-thinker. And had this been done before, the *Tindal's*, *Collins's*, *Woolſton's*, *Chubb's*, *Bolingbroke's*, would not have had ſo fair a mark whereat to ſhoot ſo plentifully (and with ſo many palpable hits at the ſame time) their *arrows*—even *bitter words*.

§ 25. And this naturally leads to the conſideration of another advantage, ariſing from the doctrine of a pre-exiſtent guilt, namely, that of re-

† The trivial argument, that God had provided, or pre-ordained a Redeemer, in favour of thoſe who ſhould be involved in the ruinous effects of Adam's fall, ſo far from being a rational appeal to, is on the contrary a barefaced inſult upon common ſenſe. Juſt as if a king ſhould condemn a man to death for another perſon's crime, in order that he might ſhew his *mercy*, in giving the imaginary offender life.

commending

commending to a fair enquiry, the mediatorial œconomy, and the redemption by Jesus Christ, in a manner proportionably more forceable, as being apparently more consentaneous to the dictates of unprejudiced reason, when grounded on the principle of a pre-existent lapse of soul's, than when founded on a supposed *imputed* transgression of Adam.

§ 26. The calm, the sedate, the reflecting Sceptic will then find charms in religion, that he never dreamt of before; will, with an unusual seriousness of mind, bethink himself of his state and condition here---will be equally anxious to enquire, whence could arise, and by what means may be removed, those intellectual depravities, and impurities, which debase him even in his own eyes, and from which reason, as well as scripture, agree it is necessary for him to be refined, and cleansed, ere it is possible for him to see God.

§ 27. Am I then a stranger, says he, and pilgrim upon earth, banished from the presence of my Maker, and from heaven, my native home? Were my transgressions in a prior state the horrid cause of this dreadful calamity? Was it by means of them, that I now wear those foul stains in my nature, by which my will and affections are corrupted, my understanding darkened and perplexed, and my whole mind debased, and degenerated from moral rectitude? For my pre-existent apostacy from God is it, that I came into the world a creature *born in sin*, by *nature a child of wrath*?--- was it for my rebellion against Him, that I am sent hither under the power and dominion of *Satan*, who seduced, as I am assured from scripture, a whole order of beings into sin? Is it for this, that I bear about me this body of sin, which is enmity against God, which is not subject to the

law

law of God, neither indeed can be; which gives maintenance to such an army of fleshly lusts, that war against my soul? --- And to restore me to the favour and affection of my offended God, to expiate the guilt of my past transgressions by his own imputed *righteousness*, to renew in me that degree of it, wherein I was first created, to rescue me from the dominion of my first betayer, and bring me again into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. ---Is it for this cause that the Son of God was manifested? Are these those works of the devil, that he came to destroy? Welome then, says he, my Saviour, my Redeemer! O thrice welcome to an entire dedication of my soul to thy word, thy will, and thy authority, thou captain of my salvation! O conduct me, thou highly-favoured one of heaven, to the mercy-seat of my offended Sovereign! O give me there to prostrate myself before his injured Majesty! Veil me from the countenance of him, that is against them, that do evil; shield me from his uplifted vengeance; under the shadow of thy wings hide me from his wrath---throw me, clad with thy righteousness, into the arms of infinite mercy--into thy arms, oh my God!---And oh give me, O God, the comfort of thine help again, and establish me with thy free spirit! So shall sinners be converted unto thee, and men shall sing of thy righteousness. Cast me not away from thy presence, and let not thy jealousy burn like fire for ever. And do thou, oh blessed Spirit, with thine all-healing, all-purifying influences on thy wing, descend upon my soul, take an unrivalled possession of my whole heart, make it a fit temple for thy abode, refine it from all its impurities, make it an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob---and I will fall low on my knees before his footstool.

§ 28. Such

§ 28. Such muſt undoubtedly be the aſpirations of an heart touched with a true ſenſe of religion; of the *true cauſe* of the wretchedneſs of man's abode here, and the deliverance propoſed to him by the mediatorial œconomy, when viewed through the medium of a pre-exiſtent obliquity, when, from a ſerious, rational, and impartial enquiry into the nature and tenor of the goſpel diſpenſation, it appears, as I think it neceſſarily muſt, that we are beings lapſed from a prior ſtate in conſequence of our aſſociation, or connection with the apoſtate powers; that from thence we derive that weight of evil in our nature, which preſſes down the ſoul, and ſinks it, when reflected on with due ſeriouſneſs, to the very borders of diſpair; that a pre-exiſtent guilt is that all-crying offence againſt heaven, under which the *whole creation groaneth, and travelleth in pain until now*---That guilt from which no other means could be effectal for our purification, but an expiation, ſatisfaction, and atonement, by the merits and mediation of Chriſt ---that dominion of ſin and ſatan, from which the captain of our ſalvation came to redeem us---that contaminating and infectious intercourſe, from which we gathered thoſe foul ſtains in our intellectual frame, from which we can only be cleanſed by the purifying and regenerating influences of the divine Spirit.

§ 29. And how agreeable is all this to the articles and homilies of the church of England, with this only difference, that a *pre-exiſtent*, not an *Adamic* guilt, is the ground-work of the whole? The former hypotheſis is that golden key which opens to the reader, in that ſacred repoſitory the holy ſcriptures (St. Paul's epiſtles more eſpecially) ſuch an inexhauſted treaſure of glowing brightneſſes, ſuch a fund of ſoul-reviving comforts, as will

will neceſſarily fill him with a rationally-formed enthuſiaſm, create in him an enraptured admiration of the richneſs of the goſpel diſpenſation, that furniſhes out to him ſo delicious, ſo luxuriant a repaſt. There will he ſee (through the medium of pre-exiſtence I mean, and that only) how it is that the---*juſt ſhall live by faith*---that *by the deeds of the law no man ſhall be juſtified in God's ſight*---that *by faith we are juſtified, and not by works*---that *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that beloeveth*, and that *whoſoever ſhall call upon the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved.*

There are other points purely Chriſtian, capable of being illuſtrated to the reader's ſatisfaction, I think, by the medium of a pre-exiſtent lapſe, which I muſt reſerve to be conſidered in the ſecond part of this work, judging it now time to anſwer a few of the principal *objections*, that may be urged againſt the doctrine itſelf, as above-ſtated.

CHAP. XII.

Objections to the above hypotheſis, ſtated and removed.

Objection I.

§ 1. IT will be aſked, by way of objection to the credibility of the doctrine of pre-exiſtence, how it is poſſible that we ſhould have exiſted in a prior ſtate, without being able now to form any idea of that ſtate, without having any conſciouſneſs of the ſoul's operations therein, any revived images on our minds, of celeſtial gratifications paſt, or inherent remorſe on our conſciences for the ſuppoſed crimes by which they were forfeited,

but

but that all ſhould be buried in one eternal gulf of oblivion?

If this be an objection ſeemingly formidable at firſt view, it will not, I believe, be found, upon examination, to have ſo much weight as is uſually aſcribed to it.

§ 2. The moſt rational, comprehenſive, and I believe the only true definition of the ſoul of man, is this, viz. that it is a ſpirit, whoſe immediate properties are *ſelf*-motion or activity, *ſelf*-penetration, *ſelf*-contraction and dilation, together with a power of *penetrating*, *moving*, *altering* (or rather determining the motion of) matter *,---properties to which are neceſſarily annexed the powers of perception, animadverſion, thought, reaſon, reflection, choice. Theſe are the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of the ſoul of man; theſe the peculiar properties, which evince its conſtitutional frame to be eſſentially different from groſs matter. As *eſſentials*, therefore, they muſt of courſe be coeval with [redacted] its firſt formation †; whence it follows naturally, that

* The ſoul, ſays Dr. More, has not any *power*, or but very little, of moving matter; but her peculiar *privilege* is of determining matter in motion. For if it were an immediate faculty of the ſoul, to *contribute* motion to matter, I do not underſtand how that faculty, never failing or diminiſhing, no more than the ſoul itſelf can fail or diminiſh, we ſhould ever be weary of motion, Dr. More, Immor. b. 2. c. 8. p. 7.

† Since it is evident, that matter is a dead ſubſtance in all reſpects, it follows, that an immaterial ſubſtance, or the ſoul, is the *only thing* in us that hath active power. And ſince it hath active power, that power muſt inhere in it, as in its ſubject; or the power muſt belong to the ſoul as a *property of its nature*. It cannot belong to the ſoul, as a mere accident; for power cannot be produced by accident, or a being cannot be endowed with powers by accident; for then we ſhall never be able to ſtop any where; all power might be thus produced by accident,

that there must have existed in the soul a series of thought, reason, reflection, &c. previous to its entrance into this world; unless we can suppose its *generation in the womb* to be in reality its first formation; an idea in which is involved the grossest absurdity, nay, even blasphemy; making the Creator, in fact, a coadjutor in the works of fornication, adultery, incest†.

§ 3. Canst

accident, and we must give up the *principles of reasoning*. And since *active power* must belong to the soul, as a property of its nature, that property cannot be separated from it, without destroying its nature altogether. For certainly *power* is the greatest perfection of any being, as the want of power is the greatest imperfection. And a being cannot be deprived of the greatest perfection of its nature, without having its nature altogether destroyed. Thus active power could no more be separated from the soul, without an act of Omnipotence to destroy its nature, than solidity (or *inactivity*) could be separated from matter, without an act of Omnipotence to destroy the nature of matter. And indeed it is absolutely necessary, that as one species of substance, *matter*, is utterly inactive by its nature and constitution, so another species of it, *spirit*, should have activity and power by its nature and constitution. Vid. Baxter's Enquiry into the Nature of the human Soul. V. 1. p. 553, &c.

If activity, then, is thus essential to the nature of the soul, thought and perception must be so too. For to be active without being percipient of the action, as the same writer observes, is to be active, not from an *internal principle*, or the power of action, but from *mechanical necessity*. To be active implies the *will* to act; and there can be no *will*, but what is determined by a greater or less degree of thought, reason, reflection, and choice. And wherever there is sense of perception, says Mr. Locke, there some idea is actually produced, and present in the understanding. B. 2. c. 9. sect. 4.

The very lowest kind of life, says Baxter, seems to consist in the perceptive capacity; so that we can never imagine this removed from a living being. And again, says he, it does not stand in need of the action of external matter upon it to become percipient. V. 1. p. 267.

† A reflection this, to which the reader will give, I hope, the due attention, and not forget that *this* is the inference which unavoidably

§ 3. Canſt thou then, whoſoever thou art, to whom the *above* objection ſeems to be of any weight, tell me what paſſed in thy mind, when thou iſſuedſt firſt from the hands of thy Creator, and waſt made a living ſoul? Tell me, if thou canſt, what were at that period thy thoughts, thy reflections? What, I ptay thee, were thy perceptions, what the ſtate of thy thoughts, when God faſhioned thee in the womb, and when thou layeſt there for nine months †? And afterwards, when thou firſt hangedſt

unavoidably follows from a ſuppoſed *daily* creation of ſouls. How much more conſentaneous to reaſon therefore, is it, to conclude, agreeably to the ſentiments of the moſt rational philoſophers, that *all* ſouls were created from the beginning of things, and that ſome of them having ſinned in their firſt ſtate, (the probability, nay actual certainty of which, we have already ſhewn from reaſon, and from ſcripture likewiſe) were detruded from their celeſtial abode, into an aerial one; from whence, after having acquired a vital congruity with matter duly prepared for the reception of ſuch of the fallen powers as ſhall be deemed worthy to enter into *this* probationary ſcene of action, ſucceſſively drop *of courſe* (or rather Providentiæ ſive Animæ Mundi Lege) into a terreſtrial habitation. By the above mentioned *aerial abode*, however, I do not mean, that *purer* region to which the ſoul will aſcend, if properly *purified* here, when ſeparated from the body, but that groſs circumambient atmoſphere of the earth, where dwell the *chief* of the apoſtate powers; with whom a more *refined*, or rather leſs *corrupt* order of lapſed beings may as reaſonably cohabit, as good and bad *men* be intermixed with each other, and *both* with furious beaſts, and other noxious animals, in this their terreſtrial habitation.

† Whether immediately upon conception ‡, or not till the embryo of the future man is formed into a fœtus, the ſoul drops into the womb, it is not neceſſary, or perhaps eaſy to determine, tho' the latter ſeems moſt probable; we may however reaſonably conclude

‡ By conception, I mean the impregnation of the ovum (wherein is contained the firſt rudiments of the human body) by the ſemen virile; for a very rational ſatisfactory illuſtration of which point, I muſt refer the reader to Dr. Parſons's ingenius treatiſe on the analogy between the propagation of animals and vegetables.

hangedſt on thy mother's breaſt, doſt thou remember what gave thee thy pains, and thy ſorrows, and what

conclude that, the neceſſary diſpoſition of parts being made for its reception, the ſoul becomes, by a derived power from its Creator, a kind of *ſubordinate architect* of its own manſion, raiſing itſelf, by a conſtant exertion of its plaſtic powers on the *encreaſing* matter (ariſing from a regular ſupply of food) from its *diminutive* form, when iſſuing from the womb, to the *determinate* bulk of man. Agreeably to which, ſays Dr. More—In every particular world ſuch as man is, ſays he, his own ſoul is the peculiar and moſt perfect architect, and being a *ſpirit*, and therefore contractable and dilatable, it begins within leſs compaſs at firſt in organizing the fitly-prepared matter, and ſo bears itſelf on in the ſame tenor of work, till the body has attained its full growth, dilates itſelf in dilating the body, and poſſeſſes it through all the members thereof. Vid. More. Immor. b. 2 c. 10.

A conjecture this, than which there cannot be one more rationally pleaſing, as it ſerves to account ſo ſatisfactorily, not only for the gradual growth of the corporeal frame of man, but for the gradual improvement likewiſe of his intellectual powers and faculties. For till the ſoul can have worked the body up to its proper organization and conformity of parts (which it can only effect by degrees) by virtue of its plaſtic faculty; till, in ſhort, the nerves, and thoſe other more *immediate* inſtruments of ſenſe, motion, and organization, the *animal ſpirits*, are rendered ſo complete as to be able to tranſmit the impreſſion of ſenſible objects to the brain, wherein centers the perceptive faculty of the ſoul, there muſt of courſe be a debility of both the corporeal and intellectual operations; but neither philoſophy nor common ſenſe will allow us to conclude, that the ſoul is totally void of ſenſe and reflection, when it enters into and begins its operations upon the corporeal frame, *becauſe* it diſcovers not that ſublimity or extenſiveneſs of reaſoning, to which a more complete organization of its material vehicle (or vivification, rather, of its organic powers) is requiſite.

I doubt not, ſays Mr. Locke, but children, by the exerciſe of their ſenſes about objects that affect them in the womb, receive ſome few ideas before they are *born*, as the unavoidable effects either of the bodies that environ them, or elſe of theſe wants or deſires that affect them; — ſuch as hunger, warm[th] B. 2. c. 9. ſect. 5. And though the ſoul, ſays a ver[y]

what drew from thee thy ſtrong cryings? Has thy mind ſtill a feeling of thoſe pains, and thoſe ſorrows?

ous modern French writer, aſtoniſhed and ſurpriſed to find itſelf confined and impriſoned, may, during the firſt days of life, remain in a ſtate of ſtupidity and dulneſs, it does not follow, that ſhe is not properly awake till ſhe begins to reaſon: on the contrary, ſhe is quickly roufed by the calls of neceſſity; the organs ſoon inform her that they ſtand in need of her orders, and the correſpondence between body and ſoul is eſtabliſhed by means of the reciprocal impreſſions they make on each other. From that inſtant the ſoul broods in ſilence over her faculties, which in due time ſhe properly prepares and brings forth into action. By the help and miniſtry of the eye, the ear, the feeling, and the other ſenſes, ſhe aſſembles a ſet of lights and ideas which ſerve her as proviſions for life; and as it is the *ſentiment* that alone preſides over and directs all theſe acquiſitions, it neceſſarily follows, that it muſt have already made a very conſiderable progreſs, before *reaſon* has begun to exert herſelf, or even taken the firſt ſtep. It gives me no ſmall degree of pleaſure, and even pride, to find my own ſentiments, as above advanced, countenanced ſince ſo ſtrongly by ſo extremely ſenſible and ingenious a writer, as is the abbot Batteau, from whom the above is taken. Vid. *His Principles of Literature*,—tranſlated by Mr. Millar. But to return. The debility and habitude of the ſoul's intellectual powers during infancy (and ſomething ſimilar may perhaps be the caſe with it, when in the womb) Dr. More aſcribes, not irrationally I think, to the then ſtate and condition of the animal ſpirits*, which being, as he ſays, more torpid and watry in children and old men, muſt needs hinder her in ſuch operations as require another conſtitution of ſpirits; though I will not profeſs myſelf abſolutely, ſays he, confident, that the ſoul cannot act without all dependence on matter; but if it does not, which is moſt probable, it muſt needs follow, that its operations will keep the laws of the body it is united to; whence it demonſtrable, adds he, how ne-

* Theſe, though looked upon by ſome as an imaginary ſubſtance only, are an actual *fluid*, diſcernable by the microſcopic eye perpetually emiſſive from and reverſive into its lodgment within the fourth ventricle of the brain, wherein alſo reſides its chief directrix, the ſoul) by the inſtrumentality of which are performed all the operations of the ſoul, ſenſitive and intellectual.

ceſſary

rows? Art thou even conscious, that thou hadst them? And yet that thou didst feel them at that time,

ceſſary purity and temperance is to preſerve and advance a man's parts. Vid. p. 206. The truth of this latter remark cannot but be obvious to any one, who conſiders how intimately the operations of the ſoul depend upon the temper and tenor of thoſe *immediate* inſtruments of reaſon and reflection *here, the animal ſpirits*. And how important the conſideration is, not only with reſpect to mens *parts*, but to their *principles* alſo, will appear from the following reflections, which, though digreſſive not a little from the point immediately under conſideration, will not, however, be altogether unacceptable, I hope, to the ſpeculative reader.

Thoſe animal ſpirits, then, above-mentioned, are a ſecretion of the blood, perpetually iſſuing from the heart, which the ſoul is neceſſitated, by her union with the body, to make uſe of in her intellectual as well as ſenſitive operations—I mean in the powers of thought, meditation, reflection, &c. Whatever, therefore, tends moſt to a fuller and more *pure* ſupply of the one, gives the ſoul of courſe a proportionably more enlarged and enlivened aptitude for the other. And from a peculiarly happy temperature and tenor of the animal ſpirits, with which ſome are naturally furniſhed, it is, that they are poſſeſſed of proportionably quicker, livelier, and brighter parts, than others: the ſoul's intellectual operations being by that means more free and diſincumbered, and better adapted for clear, cloſe, ſagacious, and ſolid reaſoning, or for the more copious and exalted efforts of *imagination*, whichever of theſe ſhall happen to be her *native* turn.

And as by means of a different temperature and tenor of the animal ſpirits, men are found to differ from one another, with reſpect to their intellectual *powers* and *endowments*, ſo to the like cauſe are we to aſcribe, generally ſpeaking, their difference from each other in point of *temper*, *paſſions*, and intellectual *affections*. The more pure and tenuous the animal ſpirits are, the more *pure* and *pious*, for the moſt part, will be the latter—I mean pure and pious affections will then more eaſily take place—and not only this, but be more permanent, active and vigorous at the ſame time; as the ſoul will then have a clearer and more ſtriking conception of the beloved object, a more open and free paſſage for its devout aſpirations, a greater ſcope for ſpiritual enlargements, and an eagerneſs therein, that will

time, the big-dropping tear abundantly witneſſed
Doeſt thou, again, remember by whom thou wert
wrapped

not eaſily keep clear of extravagance. Hence it is, that *real* piety ſo frequently terminates in *enthuſiaſm*; that abſtemious regular courſe of life, which religioniſts oft preſcribe to themſelves, naturally creating ſuch a temperature of the vital frame in general, and the animal ſpirits, of which we have been ſpeaking, in particular, the ſoul in that caſe becomes, as it were, almoſt wholly intellectual, and in proportion to the *actual* purity and piety of its *affections*, more than *human*;—when not perverted, I mean, by falſe doctrines, into a glaring *miſapprehenſion* of the divine attributes. When that is the caſe, which is too frequently the conſequence of a zeal without knowledge, the ſoul, by means of the ſame kind of tenuity and pliability (if I may ſo ſpeak) of the animal ſpirits, will be as naturally carried into an intenſe melancholy.

If then a due temperance and purity of the animal frame, is found to enable the ſoul to exert her intellectual *powers* and *affections*, with an added freedom, independency, and vigour, what muſt then be the conſequence of a reverſe ſtate? when the blood and ſpirits are defecated by fumes or foul ſecretions from a ſtomach, replete with groſs or high-ſeaſoned food, and *rich* wines, &c. neither parts, purity, nor piety can take place; imagination cannot ſpeed its courſe through ſo foul and corrupt an atmoſphere; pure deſires are overwhelmed by incentives to looſe and unchaſte gratifications; reaſon is dethroned, by the inroad of an army of fleſhly luſts; and the whole man becomes at once totally carnal, ſenſual, deviliſh. How wiſely, therefore, is faſting and abſtinence uſually directed to accompany acts of public *humiliation*? and with what propriety does the apoſtle caution us againſt making proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof; which a man cannot do more fatally, than, when running into that, too common vice, *ebriety*. Thoſe immediate inſtruments of thought, *reaſon*, and reflection, the animal ſpirits, being abſorbed, as it were, in the fumes diſtilled from the intoxicating juice, the *man* falls a victim to every irregular, ſenſual, and ſinful appetite. A variety of follies, indiſcretions, and even vile enormities, are the too frequent attendants. His eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women, and his heart ſhall utter perverſe things. Fornication, adultery, murder, are the reſult of this vice daily; and, how frequently is that truly-valuable and endearing quality in man, friendſhip, ſwallowed up in it?

A ſudden

wrapped in ſwadling-cloths, or by whom rocked from time to time in thy cradle? Who mixed for

A ſudden dilatation of the heart enſues, that oft times betrays a man into a diſcloſure of ſecrets of the greateſt conſequence, perhaps, and repoſed in him with the utmoſt confidence. Nor can he, in that ſituation, be even faithful to himſelf. In the ſudden guſts of paſſion, too naturally iſſuing from a diſtempered brain, *ſtifled* enmities, and *lurking* malevolences, all the inward emotions of envy, hatred, malice, and a multitude of deep-laid devices, ſo induſtriouſly concealed before, break from him. And this ſerves to ſhew how much we are miſtaken, in imagining, when a man's temper ſeems altered by the effects of the circulating glaſs, that there is a *creation*, as it were, of ſome *new* paſſion, ſome new-formed diſtemper of the mind? No. The latent *workings* of a miſchievous, malevolent, rancorous heart, aſſume a *confidence*, to which *reaſon*, when not abſorbed by the fumes of liquor, was a ſufficient check before; and the man unwittingly *ſhews* himſelf now, in his native, naked, worthleſsneſs. Agreeably to which, ſays Plutarch, τὸ ἰν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ τῆς γλώσσης ἴδρι μεθύοντος. i. e.

The man *ſpeaks*, when he is drunk, what he dare, only *think* when he is ſober.

And again, ſays the Epigram on Ebriety,

Αἰὶ θηρίον ἦσθα Πελυκρίτη νῦν δὲ πεπώκως
Ἐρᾳπίνης ἐγ'ἐνὶ λυσσάμίνης τι κακὸν
Αὐ μοὶ δωκίεις κακὸς, ἐμμίναι Ο'ινὸς ἐλεγχυι
Τὸν τρόπον, Οὐκ ἐγίνε νῦν κακὸς αλλ' ἐφάνης.

It was not the wine that *made* the bad man, but it was the bad man that *ſhewed* himſelf in the wine. Not that I would mean to appear ſo ſevere and dry a Cynic, with reſpect to this point, as if I had a mind to diſcountenance wholly the cheerful glaſs. Taken in moderation, it is not only ſalutary oft times to the body, but productive, at the ſame time, of a kind of invigorating, enlivening, dilation and activity in the ſoul. The miſchief of it lies in an exceſs; as ſays the Greek moraliſt,

Ὀινόν τοὶ πίνειν πελὺν κακον. Ην δὲτε αυτον
Πὶνη ἐπιςαμένως, ὲ κακὸς ἀλλ' ἀγαθὸς.
Οιογ: ἰῶμαι —Lin. 210, 211.

The author begs the *reader*'s pardon for this long digreſſion, and hopes he will frame to himſelf, in the author's favour, the beſt excuſe for it he can.

thee

thee the milky pap, and ſupplied thee with thy daily ſuſtenance? Or were not in reality theſe things ſo? Alas! They might, or they might not, for any proofs thou canſt bring of either, from thine own preſent conſciouſneſs.

When the miniſter at the font ſprinkled thee with the water of baptiſm, and thou wert engrafted into the body of Chriſt's church, when three or four around him gave ſurety for thy *leading a godly and a Chriſtian life*, and all joined in devout prayers to the almighty for the ſame, remembereſt thou, I pray, aught of this?

§ 4. When thy maturer ſtrength enabled thee to ſpring from the cradle, and from thy nurſe's arms, and thou waddleſt with eager pace from chair to chair, remembereſt thou who was the ſedulous attendant on thy feeble frame, and who kept, from time to time, thy feet from falling? And when thy tongue denied thee an utterance of what thou didſt not more wiſh to ſpeak, than thoſe about thee to hear, what was the pleaſing object of thy fancy *then?*

When afterwards thy tongue was looſed, and thou delightedſt thy fond parents with inceſſant prattle, doeſt thou remember the hundredth part of the pretty things thou ſaidſt—being a *witty child*—with what mirth thou regaledſt the admiring gueſt, and with what an heart-felt joy thy doating mother catched the whiſpered applauſe of thy growing genius?

§ 5. Where, again, is thy *conſciouſneſs* of a long train of events, and a variety of detached circumſtances in thy more ripened life, when memory got firm hold on thee? Thy gibes too, thy gambols, thy ſongs, and thy flaſhes of merriment (beſides thy ten thouſand freaks, which died in thinking) how few of them are there, which have not

paſſed

paſſed off from thy remembrance like the dew of morn, or like " the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion, " leaving not a wreck behind."

§ 6. If then it appears that the ſoul does exiſt in ſome periods of life, without retaining in *ſome* ſubſequent ſtages of her exiſtence, a conſciouſneſs of ſuch exiſtence, why may it not in *others?* In deliria, ebriety, ſleep, &c. it apparently does. With reſpect to the two firſt, the fact is ſo notorious, that it would be an abſurdity even to ſuppoſe it a matter of doubt with any one. And if in proof of the latter I again branch out into a long digreſſive note, I muſt again beſpeak the reader's candor *.

That

* It is altogether as intelligible, to ſay, that a body is extended without parts, ſays Mr. Locke, as that any thing thinks, without being conſcious of it. Hum. Und. v. 1. p. 77.

That there muſt be a conſciouſneſs of what paſſes in a man's mind during the very *time* of thinking, it may, perhaps, be granted; but that ſuch a train of thinking muſt neceſſarily be followed by an *after-recollection* of the ſubject-matter of the thought, we have proofs to the contrary from men's *dreams*. For there are frequent inſtances of perſon's talking, and ſhewing other ſigns of thinking, in their ſleep; of which, when awakened, they have remembered nothing. And, it is notorious, that many a dream is *awakened* in a man's mind, by the accidental occurrence of ſome ſimilar or relative circumſtances, without which, the man would not have *known* that he had dreamed that night at all. Mr. Locke, in ſhort, either deſignedly quibbles, or miſtakenly blunders here moſt egregiouſly, in not making the due diſtinction between *preſent* conſciouſneſs (i. e. a conſciouſneſs of what paſſes in the mind during the *time* of thinking) and an *after-recollection* of a man's thoughts. And it gives me great concern, to ſee ſo great a man dealing out ſophiſtry, inſteed of ſolid argument, ſo plentifully, in ſupport of a favourite hypotheſis; which he does moſt remarkably in his 12th, and ſome following ſections of the chapter above-quoted. In fact, I cannot help imagining, that the ſoul is, for the moſt part, equally employed in thought, ſleeping as well as waking, with this difference only, that it is, and muſt be, in the former ſtate, exerciſed in ſpeculating *internal* objects only.—I mean, images *ſenſitive*, or *intellectual*, inter-

§ 7. That there are some stages of existence therefore, through which the soul does actually pass, without

nally impressed on the sensorium *before*—whereas, waking, it has the power of taking in other external objects also. All the avenues for a fresh supply of *external* objects being shut up in sleep, the mind can only employ itself in the contemplation of such as are within, with the several detached impresses conveyed to the brain, by the instrumentality of the outward organs of sense when awake. By which means the soul has such an *imaginary* sense of things, as must necessarily appear real, till shewn to be otherwise, by external demonstrations from the awakened organs of sense and reflection. Hence it is, that the *dead* are so frequently made to live again in the *imagination*, that *past* conversations become *present*, and that we are made to act, as it were, a redoubled and repeated life. Hence it is, that things improbable, and even impossible, appear, in a manner, *real*—that yon cobler in his stall shall be a king in his bed, and the enamoured Damon in possession of his Phillis, at an hundred miles distance from her. The dreaming imagination, in short, makes reason to entertain the fond idea, of which the *awakened* mind only discovers the illusion. What the *line* and *rule* are to the mason, or other mechanic, the organic powers of the body are to the mind. The former give the workmen an *experimental* knowledge of what, *without* them, they would only have an *ideal* or *conjectural*, and that most frequently, and of consequence, an erroneous one. In like manner, the *experience* arising to the mind, from time to time, by the instrumentality of the *waking* organs of sense, is that *rule* of right, by which we are enabled to distinguish *real* existences from imaginary ones. It is not to be wondered, therefore, if, when the soul lies drowned, as it were, in the *deep* of sleep, that the various detached ideas of kings, coblers, friends, foes, sports, pastimes, frolic, follies, pains, pleasures, horses, towns, harbours, mountains, rivers, &c. &c. floating upon the surface of the imagination, separately attract, at times, the soul's attention. The *images* of things being *present* to the mind, the *man* himself seems, for the time, *present* too. The *perceptions* of the impressions made, when awake, on the sensorium, are as real as if the *objects* really existed; the soul takes them for *real*, it acts and behaves as if they were real, So that a man may be a monarch in his sleep, to all intents and purposes *, *excepting* only that the *experience of sense*, when he

* τὸ γὰρ ὡς ὑπαρχόντων ὄνειρον. Mosch.

out deriving to itself any reflex consciousness of such prior existences, viz. from its *first* formation to its descent into the womb, and its exit therefrom, in its infant state *always*, and oftentimes in deliria, ebriety, sleep, experience proves incontestably; and though the *non-consciousness* of transactions past, in a supposed prior state, cannot affect the credibility of the soul's having passed through such a state, without rendering equally disputable its *vital* existence in the womb, in deliria, ebriety, sleep, or the like; yet to set the *insufficiency* of the objection to the doctrine of pre-existence, grounded on the want of consciousness, in a far stronger light still, the reader is requested to take into consideration a circumstance hitherto scarce enough, if at all attended to, which is this, viz. supposing a *prior* existence ever so unquestionable, and even demonstrable, yet it is not in the nature of things possible, that there should be a recollection of things transacted in that state.

§ 8. Unless the soul had brought with it upon *this* stage of action, the same kind of vehicle wherein it was enclosed in the *former*, how is it possible it should have any *re-conception* of those ideas with which *that* sort of body was furnished, with proper instruments for the formation and reception? The soul in its former state was conversant, we may suppose, only with objects immaterial; the present furnishes it with such as are *material* only, i. e. the latter are the only objects of which the soul's pre-

is awake, convinces him that he is not—not *really*, though he was *ideally* so before. He then *sees* and *hears* that he is no monarch; the avenues to which sensible demonstrations were shut, or locked up, before, in sleep †.

† A very ingenious writer resolves the phenomenon of dreams into the agency of *separate spirits*; but in this, though in other respects a most engaging writer and solid reasoner, he is most egregiously mistaken. Vid. Enquiry into the Nat. of the Human Soul.

sen-

ſent vehicle can derive to the mind any poſitive, diſtinct images and repreſentations.

Is it wonderful, then, that the former ſhould be defaced and diſpoſſeſſed by the latter? Or rather, does it ſeem poſſible, that objects *immaterial* ſhould be let in upon, or any *former* images thereof be renewed in the mind, through organs ſuited to the reception of *material* images only?

§ 9. The ſoul cannot now reflect upon, ſo as to form, I mean, ideas of any thing ſpiritual or immaterial, not even of its own nature and eſſence----and wherefore? Why, becauſe it is itſelf of a ſubſtance immaterial; and the body, by the inſtrumentality of which, the ideas of objects are reflected and refracted to the mind, is not adapted to reflect to its view an object ſo refined and imperceptible to preſent ſenſe*. Agreeably

* In anſwer to which it will be urged, perhaps, that the *nature* of a *ſpirit*, or of objects immaterial, is as *conceivable* and eaſy to be defined as the nature of any thing elſe. For as for the very *eſſence* or bare *ſubſtance* of any thing whatſoever, he is a very novice in ſpeculation that does not acknowledge, *that* utterly unknowable; but as for the *eſſential* and inſeparable properties, they are as intelligible and explicable in a ſpirit as in any other ſubject whatſoever. Vid. Dr. More's Antidot. b. 1. c. 4.

That the *nature* and bare *eſſence* of matter and ſpirit is alike unknowable and unexplicable I will not take upon me to deny; but, will it therefore follow, that the exiſtence of each is equally *diſcernable* and *ſenſible?* Material objects make ſuch impreſſions on our ſenſes, as to become actually palpable. But can this be ſaid of objects immaterial? Can the exiſtence of things, not the objects of *ſenſe*, which make not impreſſions on the mind, I mean, by the inſtrumentality of the organs of either hearing, ſeeing, the taſte or the touch, &c. be ſaid to be equally obvious, knowable and *diſcernable* as thoſe which exiſt only in the *imagination*, i. e. of whoſe exiſtence the imagination is confirmed *ſolely* by the deductions of reaſon and revelation? And yet, ſuch is the caſe with pure *immateriality*, which is not capable of being manifeſted to any of our bodily ſenſes, is of a *nature* ſimilar to thoſe exiſtences alluded to in Scripture, which eye hath not ſeen, nor can ſee *here*; nor ear heard, nor which have entered into the heart of man to conceive,

Agreeably to which, says Mr. Wolaston,---the soul may contemplate the body which it inhabits, be conscious of its own acts, and reflect upon the ideas it finds; but of its own substance it can have no adequate notion, unless it could be, as it were, object and spectator. And again, says another writer †: The subtle matter which goes out of the body with the soul, is indeed too fine to strike upon our grosser senses, but we may see it when God assists us in an extraordinary manner. By the *subtle matter* here mentioned, is meant, that inward vehicle in which Plato, Aristotle, Des-Cartes, and our great Dr. More, suppose the soul to act separate from that outward one, the body ‡, by the instrumentality of which it exerts its efformative or plastic powers, for such an organization of its outward vehicle, as shall be necessary for the discharge of its vital function in such vehicle, be it an etherial, aerial, or a terrestrial one. And as my hypothesis, agreeably to the opinion of the Platonists, and other philosophers ‖, suppose the soul to have passed

ceive, but are perceivable by the eyes of the understanding only *.

* As for Dr. Berkley's hypothesis, upon which he attempts to reason men out of their *senses*, and to *disprove* the actual *existence* of what they hear, see, smell, taste, or feel. (Vid. Dr. Berkley's Principles of Human Knowledge.) I cannot, I own, think it *material* enough to require any notice here, or even any where.

† Mr. Poiret, in Mr. Bayle's Life of Rorarius.

‡ Aristotle plainly affirms, that the soul partakes of a body distinct from this organized terrestrial body, consisting of a nature etherial and lucid, and analogous to the element of the stars, φύσις ἀνάλογος ἔσα τοῦ τῶν ἄστρων στοιχείου. Vid. M. Im. b. 2. c. 14. p. 118.

‖ Should the soul have been reduced to a state of *silence* and *inactivity*, "before its turn came to revive in an earthly body,"

as

paſſed through the two *former* of the above-mentioned vehicles, previous to its entrance into *this:* another argument ariſes from that conſideration, which equally (or rather, more powerfully) demonſtrates how impoſſible it is, that there ſhould be a re-conception of things tranſacted in a prior ſtate, was our exiſtence therein ever ſo unqueſtionable.

§ 10. For, ſecondly, each *outward* vehicle of the ſoul, being the tablet whereon are impreſſed and treaſured up the images of objects conveyed thither through the organs of *that* vehicle, and reflected to the ſoul from time to time, by the *inſtrumentality* of the *inward* vehicle above-mentioned, all *prior* images and impreſſions muſt, of courſe, be *dead* to the ſoul, when it changes that vehicle (the outward vehicle, I mean) for another. And though it is, methinks, eaſy and reaſonable to imagine, that the regiſtry of facts contained in one vehicle, may be tranſmitted progreſſively and *upward*, to another, that the ſoul in each ſtage of its return thither, from whence it came, may, by means of that nearer approach to the ſource and center of perception, intuition and *reflection*, acquire a re-conceptive intimation of *many* tranſactions paſt, yet its deſcent *downwards* into this beſmearing moiſture of the firſt rudiments of life, as Dr. More expreſſes it, muſt, of courſe, lull it into an oblivion of whatever happened to it in its former abodes; nor will the *whole ſcene* of paſt tranſactions, in each ſucceſſive ſtage hither, be exhibited, perhaps, till the day wherein *the books ſhall*

as Dr. More, though with no degree of probability, I think, ſuppoſes. (Vid. Immor. b. 2. c. 14. p. 119.) ſuch a ſuppoſition, ſhould it be admitted for truth, will account for an *oblivion* of what happened to it in a *preceding* exiſtence.

be

be opened, and the dead judged, out of those things that are written in the book, according to their works. Apoc. c. 20.

§ 11. This however is certain, that whatever were the objects (material or immaterial) with which we had been conversant in a prior state, yet the difference of organs, arising from different vehicles, must render it impossible for any thing here to recal to the mind images past; the present vehicle being, toto cœlo, so dissimilar from the former, and suited to the reception of *terrestrial* images only.

You see, then, of what little avail the soul's non-consciousness of transactions past is, towards rendering incredible its supposed existence in a prior state; or rather, how impossible it is, supposing such an existence demonstrable, that there should be transmitted to the soul, in this its third vehicle, a consciousness of what passed in the first.

§ 12. Obj. II. It will, however, in the next place, be urged, that if we are here under a judicial degradation for crimes before committed, and probationers for a recovery of the divine favour, forfeited for such trespasses, as my hypothesis suggests, it is inconceivable how, without being conscious of either the guilt or chastisement therein implied, we can be brought to such a repentant state of mind, as must be necessary for the obtaining the wished-for reconciliation.

§ 13. In answer to this objection, I would, in the first place, ask, where lies the fault, if men are really so much in the dark, with respect to *these* points, as the objection supposes? Would they but give a fair, unprejudiced ear to the voice of reason, scripture, and the most learned, ingenious, and religious of almost every age, I do not see how it

is

is possible they can be under any kind of doubt about either.

§ 14. I have already considered a pre-existent lapse of human souls, not only as the belief of most of the learned, in all ages past, but as the very groundwork of the gospel dispensation.

The former has been sufficiently evinced in a foregoing chapter; nor could the latter be less obvious to the Christian world in general, would men be persuaded to throw aside their prejudices, give the scriptures a fair and rational *interpretation*, and aim to make Christianity coincide with the nature and attributes of God, its divine Author. Evidences, without number, of a depraved, degenerate nature in man, his own condemning heart sets in continual array before him; that this cannot be the work either of God or our primogenitor Adam, reason proves inconteſtibly; that we are children of wrath from our birth, and under the power and dominion of Satan, in our *natural*, *unregenerate ſtate*, ariſing from a pre-exiſtent aſſociation with the apoſtate angels, and that to purify our corrupted nature, to expiate our original guilt, and to reſcue us from the powers of darkneſs, is the very end and deſign of the goſpel diſpenſation, we have full ſufficient evidence, from reaſon, ſcripture, and the expreſs fundamental articles of the Chriſtian faith; or, I know not what is the true language of ſcripture, what ideas we are to affix to the terms *redemption*, *atonement*, &c. * nor what we are to underſtand by St. Paul's

* The very ingenious Dr. Taylor, indeed, obſerves as follows: "The ſcriptures of the New Teſtament, excepting Rom. xii. &c. and 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. before explained, do always aſſign the *actual wickedneſs and corruption of mankind*, *wherewith*

Paul's being sent to open the eyes of the Gentiles; to turn them from darkness to light, and from the

wherewith they have corrupted themselves, as a reason and ground (next to the grace of God) of Christ's coming into the world. When the apostle, Rom. i. 16, 17. is professedly demonstrating the excellency and necessity of gospel grace (which is the same thing as the redemption in Christ) for the salvation of the world, he proves it, not from the state of sin and misery, into which they were brought by Adam's fall, but from the sin and misery which they had brought upon themselves by their own wicked departing from God—ver. 21. Because, that when they knew God, they glorified him, not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. And so on to the end of the chapter.

" And as the Gentiles, so likewise the Jews had corrupted themselves, and stood in need of gospel grace, and redemption, as well as other men, Chap. ii. iii. to ver. 19. where he concludes, he had, from notorious facts and scripture-proofs, stopped every mouth, both of Jew and Gentile, and brought in the *whole world guilty before God*, and insufficient for their own justification upon the deeds of mere law. And then goes on—but *now the righteousness of God*, or that method of salvation which the gracious law-giver hath provided, *is manifested* to the world, &c. for the benefit of all sorts of men (Ver. 23. For all stand in need of it, all having sinned and come short of the glory of God, i. e. the obedience of God) that they may be justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ, &c. You see the apostle grounds the grace of redemption upon the actual wickedness of mankind, and upon no other cause or reason. So Tit. iii. 3. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, &c. Ver. 4. But after that the kindness and love of God, our Saviour, towards man, appeared,—Ver. 5. According to his mercy he saved us, &c.—Ver. 6. Which he hath shed on us, &c. Ver. 7. That being justified by his grace we should be made heirs, &c. Gal. i. 4. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from this present evil world. i. e. from the lusts of the flesh. 1 Pet. i. 18. We are redeemed from a vain conversation. 1 John iii. 8. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. I short (excepting the two places above-excepted, which relate

the *power of Satan* unto God. And that the ſtate of the Gentile world is to be conſidered as the *natural*

relate only to the reverſing the ſentence of common mortality) I know not of any place in ſcripture where redemption is not aſſigned on God's part, to his own free grace; and on man's part to the depravity and corruption of the world, wherewith they have depraved themſelves. And I verily believe it is not in the power of any man to bring any text to the contrary." Vid. Dr. Taylor on Original Sin, Part 3. p. 290.

The deſign of our Saviour's coming into the world, therefore, according to Dr. Taylor's opinion, was not to redeem mankind from the guilt and puniſhment of any corruption *of nature*, inherent or derived, but to atone for their actual *perſonal* treſpaſſes, or (as he expreſſes it) *their own wicked departing from God*—both Jew and Gentile *had corrupted themſelves*; and ſtood equally in need of goſpel grace and redemption, all having ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God. But how ſinned? By any derived, imputed guilt from Adam? No, ſays Dr. Taylor; and with great truth, I believe. But they ſinned, ſays he, by their wicked departing from God; by their own actual, *perſonal* wickedneſs; and on this, and no other cauſe or reaſon whatſoever, is grounded the grace of redemption. But this wicked departing from God, this *perſonal* wickedneſs, &c. whence proceeded that? What could urge creatures, living under ſo ſtrong a ſenſe of the nature and attributes of the divine Being, and of their manifold obligations to him, to requite his inexhauſted goodneſs with ſuch repeated acts of impiety, ingratitude, and vile enormities? What, but a *heart* elapſed from original righteouſneſs, eſtranged from God and goodneſs, and devoted wholly to the ſervice of the prince of darkneſs? A releaſe, therefore, from the original *guilt*, deſerved puniſhment, and growing *power* of this malady (and not as Dr. Taylor ſuppoſes, from the ſeveral ſpecies of vice which could not *but* flow therefrom) is the whole and ſole object of the redemption by Jeſus Chriſt. This is plainly intimated, by the apoſtle, to the Romans, c. v. and x. For when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.—When we were enemies—i.e. when we were in a ſtate of enmity with God, children of wrath, as we all were by nature, on account of that ſtate of ſin and iniquity in which we were born, and thoſe corruptions of nature which attended us from the womb, we were reconciled to God, were

reſerved

tural ſtate of *all* men, ſeems evident from the following paſſage, of St. Paul to the Epheſians. *And*

reſcued from the power and puniſhment of thoſe corruptions, &c. and that apoſtacy from God, by the death of Chriſt; and that the ſinners, here alluded to by the apoſtle, as reconciled to God, and of courſe, cleanſed from their ſins, are not to be conſidered as ſinners, made ſuch by perſonal treſpaſſes here, but by that original debaſement of nature, in which they were conceived *. For, in the firſt ſenſe, even the regenerate and converted, were repreſented as ſinners ſtill. If we ſay, we have no ſin, ſays St. John, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John i. 8. But ſins, conſidered in the other ſenſe, the ſins which were the immediate objects of redemption, they are forgiven us; are, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, nailed to the croſs. *The body of ſin is deſtroyed. ſin ſhall not now* have dominion over us. *For we are not under the law, but under grace.*

But, ſays Dr. Taylor, " the redeemer himſelf frequently ſpeaks of various parts of his own great work; ſuch as, enlivening the world, converting ſinners, raiſing the dead, &c. but of redeeming it from the ſinfulneſs and corruption of nature *derived from Adam*, he ſaith not one word, in all the four goſpels."

I muſt, however, beg leave here to obſerve, that our Saviour's ſilence, with reſpect to this, or any other ſuppoſed ſcripture-doctrine, is not to be conſidered abſolutely as a kind of impeachment of its credibility and importance; it being evident, that the myſtery of godlineſs was not wholly revealed, but in part; and on *purpoſe* concealed by our Saviour, from even his own diſciples. I have many things (ſays our Saviour, to his diſciples, juſt before his departure from them) *I have*

* This, I preſume, will be judged a ſufficient reply to what follows, from Dr. Taylor, p. 110, 111, &c. " Far was it from the apoſtle's thoughts, to ſuggeſt any thing tending to depreciate our nature. His true intent was, to convince the Epheſians, they were children of wrath, through the treſpaſſes and ſins in which they had *walked*. For he is not ſpeaking of their nature, or the conſtitution of their ſouls and bodies, as they came into the world; but, evidently, of the vicious courſe of life they had led among the Gentiles." But the point in queſtion is, *what*, and whence, were their *principles*, which lead to that vicious courſe of life, &c.?

And you *hath he quickened, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. Wherein, in time paſt, ye walked according to the courſe of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience. Among whom alſo we all had our converſation in times paſt in the luſts of our fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* Intimating, that the apoſtle and his Chriſtian converts were, before their converſion, upon the ſame footing entirely with the Gentile world, walked as they did, according to the courſe of this world, and of him who is the head of that aerial kingdom, and of the ſpirit which now works in the children of diſobedience; (Vid. Eſtium in Loc.) that they were led aſtray, not by the impetuoſity of their *carnal* diſpoſitions only, but by the depravity τῶν διανοιῶν of their mental *affections*, their *minds* alſo; and were *therefore*, on that account, and by *nature*, the *children of wrath*, like as others. And, that the church of England conſiders now the natural *unregenerated* ſtate of man entirely in the ſame light, appears evidently, not only from her articles and homilies,

many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: But the time cometh (ſays he afterward) that I ſhall no more ſpeak unto you in proverbs, but I ſhall ſhew you plainly of the Father, viz. by the Spirit of truth, which he promiſed to ſend unto them, and which was gradually to unfold to the world the great myſtery of the redemption by Chriſt; a great part of which remains to this day, if not totally concealed, at the beſt but obſcurely revealed.

Whoſoever, ſays Dr. Butler, will ſeriouſly conſider that part of the Chriſtain ſcheme, which is revealed in Scripture, will find ſo much unrevealed, as will convince him, that to all the purpoſes of objecting and judging, we know as little as of the conſtitution of nature. Butler's Annal. p. 275.

but

but from the introduction to the form of infant baptism, and in her church catechism. For, what is the priest's declaration in the introduction to the form of baptism? Is it not, dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are *conceived* and *born in sin*, and that our Saviour Christ saith, none can enter into the kingdom of heaven except he be regenerate, and born a-new, of water and the Holy Ghost? And does he not beseech the congregation to call upon God, to grant to *that* child, to be baptized, that thing which by *nature* he cannot have? And is not his first prayer to God, for his *infinite mercies*, that he would *mercifully* look upon that *child*; that he would *wash* him and *sanctify* him with the Holy Ghost, that he might be *delivered from his wrath* (even before he could speak, or discern good or evil) and received into the ark of Christ's church? And upon what else, but a presumption of the efficacy of baptism, to restore the *infant* from the punishment of original sin, does the priest ground his assurance, and give the same hope to the sponsors, that God will receive that *present* infant, that he will embrace him with the *arms of his mercy*, will give unto him the blessing of eternal life, and make him partaker of his everlasting kingdom? And what answer does our church catechism give to the question—What is the inward and spiritual grace? Is it not—A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness, for being *by nature born in sin and children of wrath*, we are hereby made the CHILDREN OF GRACE.

That our church cannot *reasonably* be understood to resolve this inherent delinquency in our nature to an *imputed guilt* from Adam, I have already shewn in my comment on her ninth article. It is, however, very clear from scripture,

and the nature and tenor of the gospel dispensation, that mankind are from their birth, and in their *natural unregenerate* state, children of wrath, and under the power and dominion of Satan; and if, from what has already been said upon this point, this complex calamity in man should appear to be the result of a prior association with the apostate powers, or of a pre-existent guilt of some kind or another (for this salvo I must reserve to myself) shall the want of a consciousness of the several circumstances of the supposed lapse, which, in the nature of things is not, as I have shewn above, possible, be deemed a sufficient warrant for the *disbelief* of the hypothesis, in opposition to reason, revelation, and the opinion of the most rational and approved writers, Heathen, Jewish, and Christian philosophers, &c.? Have we, in fact, any other consciousness of our being the *offspring of heaven*, and candidates for a future immortality, than what arises from the same kind of information?—Is, in short, any stronger evidence appealed to, or even required, in proof of a God, the immortality of the soul, or of a future state of rewards and punishments? And, is our future felicity less dependent on the credibility and certainty of those doctrines, than on the consciousness of a supposed pre-existent lapse? And if that original guilt, charged upon us by scripture, is, in reality, derived from our first parents, how comes it to pass, that there are millions in the world, who are so far from having a consciousness of such *supposed* truth in their minds, that they treat, on the contrary, with the utmost derision and detestation, the *extraordinary* doctrine?

And then, *secondly*; that a *consciousness* of past transactions is not essentially necessary for the

reformation

reformation of a being, degraded for such transactions, as the above objection supposes, the case of Nebuchadnezzar (not to mention any other argument at present) clearly evinces. What consciousness had he of that wretched condition to which he was reduced, or the crimes from which it resulted, when, as scripture informs us, he *was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles feathers, and his nails like birds claws? At the end of the days*, indeed, when his seven years degradation was at an end, he lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and his understanding returned unto him, and he blessed the most High, and praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever.

Now, whether there was, or was not, an actual transformation of the monarch, into the form of a beast, it is not essential to the point in question to determine; it being sufficient to observe, concerning what scripture informs us in express terms, that his *heart*, or the state of his mind, was *changed* from *man*'s heart, and a beast's *heart* was given him; and that, without any apparent consciousness of either his degradation, or the guilt for which it was the destined punishment, a proper remorse for his former pride, vanity, and self-sufficiency, was the happy consequence. There is, however, no reason to doubt but that a *retrospective scene* of past transactions, will, hereafter, in consequence of a pre-concerted plan, worthy a God of infinite wisdom and justice, be laid open to all those who have travelled through this vale of misery, *irreminiscent* of the country from which they *came*, and even without a thought *whither* the road they are in shall happen to lead, which may be productive of every desireable advantage. By what

other clue can we, in the name of reaſon, trace the conſiſtency of divine providence, with reſpect to the brute creation?

That brutes are endowed with ſome degree of reaſon and reflection, and a ſenſibility of pain, as well as pleaſure, an obvious truth to all rational enquirers. Nor is it leſs evident and unqueſtionable, that the latter is oftentimes more than over-balanced by the former.—To mention only that excellent and moſt ſerviceable animal, the horſe: What exquiſite, what affecting tortures do many of theſe animals endure (though ſome few of them, perhaps, meet with a more friendly fate) from ſome mercileſs, callous-hearted monſter of a maſter! How frequently, to the pangs of hunger and a diſtempered body, are added the moſt cutting ſtripes and ſcourges, moſt liberally, and oftimes wantonly, dealt out by an inhuman driver, or ſome human brute, a rider! And all this, perhaps, for not effecting impoſſibilities!

But wherefore all this wretchedneſs? Wherefore all theſe agonizing pains and miſeries heaped on an helpleſs offſpring of divine providence? Are they not fleſh and blood? Do *they* not, as well as *we*, know what ſorrow means? Were they brought into a ſenſible exiſtence for nothing but the ſervice, or rather to gratify the pride, the wantonneſs, the cruelty of man? Shall one being be created, even under the bare poſſibility of being made miſerable, ſolely for the uſe or pleaſure of another? Lord, what is man? or, rather, what are not brutes?

The Indians aſk, if brutes have not ſouls? if not, then, ſay they, matter thinks. Cicero ſays, "That God himſelf is the ſoul of brutes," therefore, ſays the Indian, "ſhall they be found

ſuffering

ſuffering without a CAUSE, or without a *recompenſe*?"

If it ſhould be urged, that the aſſigning ſouls to one part of the brute creation, will reduce us to the neceſſity of ſuppoſing the *like* to actuate the moſt minute ſpecies of vital nature alſo; I ſhall only remind the ſpeculative and philoſophic part of mankind, that there is diſcernable, by the microſcopic eye, as exquiſite a due-proportioned diſpoſition of organs, fibres, &c. (the more amazing, in proportion as they are more minute) in the one as in the other—That, again, the ſoul has the power of ſelf-contraction to an infiniteſſimal degree, as well as that of ſelf-dilatation—that, ſuppoſing, in the next place, every organized body, as well in the brute creation as in the rational, to be an allotted *temporary* priſon for a *pre-delinquent* ſoul (an hypotheſis, than which, there cannot, I think, be one more rational) it is eaſy to conceive how, and why, *ſome* may be made priſoners here more at large, as we ſay, and entruſted with privileges and faculties more numerous, extenſive, and exalted than others: and that, laſtly, it is impoſſible to ſay into how many different kinds of vehicles a ſoul may tranſmigrate, 'ere its *plaſtic faculty* be refined enough to inform one wherein to perform the functions of an *intelligent* and rational life.

§ 16. But ſtill, ſay you, when I paſs through the ſtreets of this great metropolis, or travel into different countries, what multitudes of the human race appear, with a complacency of contenance which, ſo far from teſtifying any inward conſciouſneſs of a *prior* guilt, forbids our entertaining the leaſt ſuſpicion of their being chargeable with any thing of that kind! And, ſhould it be told them, that they had not only lived in a

prior ſtate, but were detruded into this lower world, as a kind of diſinherited offspring of heaven, and adherents to the prince of darkneſs; how few are there who would not be fired with indignation at the horrid report? When, again, we view the Anointed of heaven, kings of the earth, and all others who bear rule in the ſeveral parts of the world; perſonages conſecrated to religious purpoſes, powers and preheminences, prelates and their ſubordinate dignitaries in the church, the venerable miniſters of juſtice, and men of eminence in every order and profeſſion—ſhall theſe, I ſay, be looked upon as beings ſunk down by the weight of a *pre-exiſtent* guilt? Is this, in any degree, credible? What, ſhall we dare to view majeſty itſelf in ſo unfavourable, ſo uncomfortable a light? And are all—even all—princes, prelates, peaſants, pedlars, in the eye of the Deity, on one and the ſame ignominious level?

In anſwer to theſe queries I muſt, in the firſt place, obſerve, that the *marvelloufneſs* of a doctrine is not, of *itſelf*, a ſufficient foundation for a diſbelief of it, it being no uncommon thing for errors to be admitted for truths, *only* becauſe they are *popular*, or *eſtabliſhed* errors, which the many ſucceſſive deviations from old received *ſyſtems*, eccleſiaſtical or civil, ſpeculative or philoſophic, abundantly evince; and that, therefore, *novelty* is as likely to have truth on its ſide as *antiquity*.

I muſt, in the ſecond place, deſire the reader to give due attention to what has been already obſerved; that, even ſuppoſing our deſcent hither to be the reſult of a pre-exiſtent guilt; it does not, therefore, follow, either that all of us are criminal in the ſame reſpect, or even any of us upon a footing with the apoſtate angels, or in an equal degree objects of the divine diſpleaſure. But,

that

that orthodoxy and ſcripture unite, in fixing upon *all*, majeſty itſelf not excepted, an original, inherent guilt and depravity of nature, the reader will not, I apprehend, diſpute; and as the honour and equity of God, and the credit, dignity, and authority of our religion, require this queſtion fairly to be diſcuſſed, viz. whether ſcripture aſcribes that original guilt, &c. to the *imputed* treſpaſſes of our firſt parents, or to a perſonal pre-exiſtent default in ourſelves, let reaſon, the grand criterion of truth, and the only infallible interpreter of ſcripture-doctrines, determine the point, and my hypotheſis will not appear, perhaps, more marvellous than manly, rational, and, I had almoſt ſaid, unqueſtionable.

And, then, thirdly, though the high honours, pre-eminences and powers, to which many by birth, others by a ſeries of fortunate events, arrive, may, from a ſuperficial view of things, perſuade us to conſider the glittering proprietors thereof, rather as peculiar *favourites* of heaven, than *lapſed* apoſtates from his power and authority; yet, how very ill grounded ſuch a concluſion very often is, experience too frequently proves. Many of the *fancied bleſſings* of life are oft-times given in the Deity's wrath, and in order to ſhew how equally contemptible, in his ſight, are both the receiver and the gift. Nor could providence more effectually convince the world what a ſhare of pride, vanity, cruelty, want of feeling for the diſtreſſes of others, &c. lodged in the heart of ſome, than by heaping on them riches, or inveſting them with power and authority! In many others, indeed, we cannot help conſidering them as tokens of the divine favour, and rewards of a prior *comparative* degree of merit. And though royalty,

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in particular, wears too frequently the image of the ruler of this world, the prince of the powers of darkneſs, yet, ſometimes, it ſhines on a happy people, with the ineffable glories of piety, purity, and ſteady patriotiſm. Majeſty, ſo arrayed, beſpeaks an Original ſuperior to the common race of lapſed beings, and almoſt tempts the inferior claſs of mortals to ſay, of perſonages *ſo dignified*, "The Gods are come down to us, in the likeneſs of men."

It may ſtill be urged, that this world is ſo far from being that ſtate of puniſhment and excluſion from happineſs, which the doctrine of a pre-exiſtent lapſe of ſouls ſuppoſes, that, upon the whole, it is productive of public and private happineſs in great abundance.

With reſpect to the firſt, viz. public felicity, and to this *Canaan* of happineſs, *our preſent* ſtate, compared with others, may, perhaps, be deemed (and I wiſh we were ſufficiently ſenſible of the happy difference) what the objection ſuppoſes. Heaven be praiſed, we have none of the miſeries under which other nations are at this time labouring! Ours is not now the horrid ſeat of war; nor are plagues, peſtilences, fiery irruptions, and devouring earthquakes, the deſolating horrors of this our Sion; nor are galling oppreſſions of tyrants, nor rude and ſavage barbarities, common amongſt us: but, are not theſe the miſeries, under which groan, more or leſs, the far greater part of the globe? And, are we not a kind of peculiars, exempt from the ſcourge of heaven?

§ 18. Carry we, then, ourſelves into a view of life in detached pictures of it, and what are the moſt exalted gratifications here, when contraſted with that portion of bliſs which we have forfeited, and

to

to which we can be reſtored by Chriſtianity only? Are they more than ſo many playthings in the hands of children, far ſhort of manly enjoyments, and of a rational and ample fruition? And if to theſe we add, the incidental misfortunes, diſquietudes, and deep calamities of life, can we be ſaid to enjoy a—life of happineſs? Is it not at beſt a life of diſſatisfaction?

I am apt to think, ſays Mr. Woollaſton, with reſpect to private felicity, that, even among thoſe whoſe ſtate is beheld with envy, there are *many* who, if at the end of their courſe they were put to their option, whether, without any reſpect to a future ſtate, they would repeat all the pleaſures they have had in life, upon condition, to go over again alſo all the diſappointments, the ſame vexations and unkind treatment from the world, the ſame ſecret pangs and tedious hours, the ſame labours of the body and mind, the ſame pains and ſickneſſes, would be far from accepting them at that price. But here the caſe, as I have put it, only reſpects them who may be reckoned among the more *fortunate paſſengers*; and for one that makes his voyage ſo well, thouſands are toſt in tempeſts and loſt.

How many never attain any comfortable ſettlement in the world? How many fail, after they have attained it, by various misfortunes? What melancholy, what diſtractions are cauſed in families, by inhuman or vicious huſbands; falſe or peeviſh wives, refractory or unhappy children; and if they are otherwiſe, if they are good, what ſorrow for the loſs of them? How many are forced by neceſſity upon drudging and very ſhocking employments, for a poor livelihood? How many ſubſiſt upon begging, borrowing, and

and other ſhifts, nor can do otherwiſe? How many meet with ſad accidents, or fall into deplorable diſeaſes? Are not all companies, and the very ſtreets filled with complaints and grievances, and doleful ſtories? I verily believe, that a great part of mankind may aſcribe their deaths to want and dejection. Wooll. Rel. Nat. p. 207.

§ 19. OBJEC. III. It may be urged, if the ſoul did actually exiſt in a prior ſtate, it is very extraordinary, that that pre-exiſtence ſhould not have been intimated to us in the *moſaic hiſtory* of the creation, whereas that evidently ſuppoſes the *ſoul* of man, as well as his *body*, to have been then *firſt* formed by the Creator.

That the Moſaic creation was not the original creation, I have endeavoured to prove already, and that the *deſign* of the Moſaic hiſtory accounts for its ſilence with reſpect to a pre-exiſtent lapſe of human ſouls, the reader will ſee from what follows.

It is certain, ſays St. *Baſil*, that Moſes did not deſign to write of the creation of *all things*, but only of things *viſible* and *corporeal*.

He is wholly ſilent with reſpect to the creation of human ſouls, whence the divines of the Chriſtian church are, as ſays Brockleſby (p. 502.) extremely at a loſs, *de origine animæ*, not knowing which of the three opinions to prefer, that of the pre-exiſtence of ſouls, or that of their creation, and infuſion by the immediate hand of God, in ſucceſſive generations; or that which derives them from propagation. Which total ſilence, touching the origin of ſouls, is a plain indication, that the creation of them was no part of the Moſaic creation.

And

And, it is evident, that the Moſaic hiſtory of the creation is, in the whole of it, nothing elſe but an hiſtory of the production of a world of terreſtrial animals, and of God's making proviſion for them as ſuch; and reaches to nothing higher, than the making ſuch a terreſtrial animal as man, not aſcending to the creation of his intellectual ſoul. It aſcends not to the creation of any living creature higher than terreſtrial animals, ſays not a word of the creation of angels; and, as a Jewiſh writer obſerves, in the hiſtory of the creation, only viſibles, *quæ viſu percipiuntur*, are treated of; ſuch as heaven, the earth, moon and ſtars, plants, animals, and ſuch like; not ſuch things as, being immaterial, are diſcernable only by the mind. Menaſſ. Ben. Iſr. Qu. in Gen. p. 21. Nor is the ſilence of Moſes, with reſpect to the pre-exiſtence of ſouls, at all to be wondered at, when we conſider how many truths of the utmoſt importance are left totally unnoticed by him. He ſays nothing of the knowledge of God, nothing of his eſſence and attributes, nothing of his divine nature and ſovereignty, nothing of his rights, dues, and prerogatives, nothing of his true worſhip and ſervice, nor even any thing of the ſervice of ſacrifice. And though man is eſſentially, more or leſs, a religious animal, is neceſſarily under the law of religion, and has the law of nature written, as is ſuppoſed, on his heart, yet even of the law of nature, and the multifarious branches of it, there is no mention at all in the Moſaic hiſtory; no moral philoſophy, no divine morality, nor any of the great rules and precepts of ſobriety, righteouſneſs, and godlineſs. And ſo, though man is allowed to be poſſeſſed of an heaven-born

ven-born ſoul, yet there is as little notice taken in the Moſaic creation of the heaven-born ſoul of man, as there is of the creation and fall of angels, and that is none at all; nothing of the origin and immortality of the ſoul, nothing relative to its preſent and future felicity, nothing of the end and buſineſs, the holineſs, and true happineſs of man; nothing of ſalvation, and the way to it; nothing of another world, nothing of either heaven or hell; or of ſpirituals and eternals. The Moſaic hiſtory, therefore, being nothing elſe, as to the letter of it, but an hiſtory of what belongs to God's creating terreſtrial animals, as ſuch, and making for them a ſuitable proviſion, it is no reaſonable objection to the belief of the ſoul's prior exiſtence, that no mention of it is made in the Moſaic hiſtory of the creation.

But, not to dwell any longer on objecting to this hypotheſis, ſo apparently ill-grounded, the author begs leave to haſten to the concluſion of this firſt part of his well-intended, however ill-executed, plan.

CONCLUSION.

As the author has endeavoured to ſhew, that the belief of a lapſe of human ſouls, from original rectitude in a prior ſtate, has for its ſupport reaſon and ſcripture, the opinion of the moſt learned and ingenious among the ancient philoſophers, the Greek and Latin fathers, as alſo of ſome very eminent writers of a more modern date, and not only this, but that it is the very *foundation* of the *goſpel-diſpenſation*, and the only medium through which we can ſee *original ſin*, *juſtification*, and *redemption*, and the other eſſential articles

articles of the Chriſtian faith in any *rational*, *ſtriking* and *conſiſtent light*, he can only wiſh, that the *execution* of the deſign may be equal to the *importance* of it. He flatters himſelf, however, that the latter will entitle him to all the candour from the reader, that, with reſpect to the former, he would deſire; which will make him proceed with more chearfulneſs to the conſideration and illuſtration of thoſe other material points of enquiry which may probably be *hereafter conſidered*.

F I N I S.

ADDENDA.

Ad. 1. WHOEVER will ſeriouſly conſider, *that part* of the Chriſtian ſcheme, which is revealed in ſcripture, will find ſo much unrevealed, as will convince him, that to all the purpoſes of objecting and judging, we know as little of it as of the conſtitution of nature. Butler's Anal. p. 275.

This is not at all to be wondered at, when we take into our conſideration a circumſtance, to which there ſeems not to have been given, as yet, the due attention, viz. that, added to the want of thoſe informations, which were purpoſely ſuppreſſed by our Saviour, as above-intimated, we find even the apoſtle St. Paul, who was *ſeparated unto the goſpel of Chriſt*, acting no leſs upon the reſerve throughout the whole courſe of his miniſtry; either *partially* relating, or purpoſely inveloping, in myſtic types and alluſions, many things relative to the goſpel diſpenſation. An obſervation, the truth of which is confirmed by his own expreſs declaration. For though he diſcloſed, from time to time, the arcana of the goſpel œconomy to a ſelect deſerving *few—to them who were perfect*, as he ſays, yet in general he ſpake the *wiſdom of God in a myſtery*. *We ſpeak wiſdom*, ſays he, *among them who are perfect*; yet, *not the wiſdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.*

But we ſpeak (to the bulk of his hearers he means) *the wiſdom of God in a myſtery.*

He had before obſerved, to the Corinthians, that diſdaining altogether the glittering pomp of eloquence, or a vain oſtentatious ſhew of human wiſdom, he had, with the utmoſt plainneſs and ſimplicity of ſpeech, declared to them the *teſtimony of God*; ſollicitous only to inculcate for the preſent, and as a foundation for their further progreſs in the knowledge of Chriſtianity, the belief of *Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*, he reſerved ſome of the more remote, recondite truths, contained in that *belief* (though not all of them, for a reaſon which will hereafter occur) for the information *of the perfect*—for the ſincere, humble, rightly *diſpoſed* convert*.

Whence it follows, that the apoſtle's *full and thorough inſight* into the nature, tenor, and ſeveral circumſtances of the goſpel diſpenſation, is not eaſily, if at all, to be collected from what is tranſmitted to us in his epiſtle's; in which, as St Peter ſays, there are ſome things *hard to be underſtood.*

Account, ſays he, *that the long ſuffering of our Lord is ſalvation; even as our brother Paul alſo, according to the wiſdom given unto him, hath written unto you.*

* Credendum *omnibus* proponitur Chriſtum mortuum, eſſe ut nos e Poteſtate diaboli eriperet. *Perfectis* autem dicitur quo Jure totum humanum genus in Diaboli Poteſtatem fuerit redactum: ac rurſus quo Jure & Æquitate per Chriſti Mortem fuerit inde ereptum. And again, as a comment on *We ſpeak the wiſdom of God in a myſtery*, it is added. Sapientiam Dei quæ abſcondita eſt, id eſt Concilia divinæ ſapientiæ, quæ Deus eſſe voluit abſcondita & ante Filii ſui Paſſionem pauciſſimis revelata, loquimur & docemus *non propalam & paſſim apud omnes* (quia non *omnes* ea capiunt) ſed in Myſterio & apud *pauciores*. Vid. Ellium in Loco.

As

As also, in all his epistles *speaking in them of these things*; *in which are some things* hard to be understood, 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

That the epistle, to which the words ἐγραψεν ὑμῖν written *unto you*, particularly refers, is that of St. Paul to the Hebrews*; and not, as is usually judged, to the 2d chapter of his epistle to the Romans: the learned Estius has, I think, proved beyond dispute. Nor is it less evident that St. Peter alludes not to this or that *particular passage*, in that epistle to the Hebrews, but to the whole thread of reasoning (the major part of it however) therein contained; and further, that the obscurity which he ascribes to that epistle in particular he supposes to be applicable likewise to all his epistles in general.

As also in all his epistles speaking in them of those things, &c. in *which* ἐν αἷς (not ἐν αἷς as some copies erroneously have it) in which *epistles* are some things *hard* to be *understood*.

From which passage the same judicious commentator draws the following inference. It is abundantly evident, says he, that St. Peter affirms, that there are in St. Paul's epistles, things hard to be understood; and at the same time that it is a common thing for the other scriptures, as well as St. Paul's epistles, to be misinterpreted and perverted by the unlearned †.

The reader is not, however, to infer from hence, that in the Ἀνυπότακτα ascribed to St. Paul's

* And principally to the eleventh chapter of that epistle, according to Dr Hammond.

† Apertissimum est hoc Petri Testimonium in iis quæ scripsit Paulus esse quædam intellectu difficilia; simul indicans et cæteris Scripturis id esse commune quod et eas sicut Pauli Scripta depravent Homines indocti. Vid Estium in Loco.

epiſtles—the *things hard to be underſtood*, the neceſſary indiſpenſable credenda of a Chriſtian, truths, the belief of which is eſſential to ſalvation, are included, the contrary being abundantly evident. A lively *operative* faith in Chriſt, as the Redeemer of mankind, which is the very baſis, nay, and even the ſum and ſubſtance of Chriſtianity, is not only the plain, *obvious* object of the apoſtle's miniſtry, but a conſtant topic of exhortation throughout his whole epiſtles. A faith, which (actuated and enlivened, I ſay, by a correſpondent purity of life) has given, I doubt not, all who have lived and died therein, an unqueſtioned paſſport to the regions of bliſs; incapable as they were of fathoming *the depth of the riches of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God*, diſplayed in the great work of man's redemption, of framing to themſelves any idea of an atonement *due* to a pre-exiſtent ſtate of guilt, or of conceiving that a bleſſing, greater or more extenſive, was accompliſhed by Chriſt's mediation, interceſſion, &c. * than a deliverance from the evils conſequent on Adam's treſpaſs. Theſe are points to which the apoſtle, I own, does but either diſtantly allude or myſteriouſly inculcate; concluding, as we may ſuppoſe, that, in after times, the SPIRIT OF TRUTH would, by due degrees, lead mankind into a diſcovery of thoſe and many other important truths, reſpecting the mediatorial œconomy, which neither the world was then *capable* of receiving, or he himſelf *at*

* That the *death* of Chriſt was made a *condition* of our redemption, or that *it* was any thing more than a *contingent* conſequence of his miniſtry (or as ſuch *foreſeen*, *propheſied*, and *prefigured* of old, and alluded to in the Moſaic rites and ſacrifices, &c.) it is neither eaſy of belief, nor capable, I think, of ſcripture proof—But as to this others are to judge for themſelves.

liberty

liberty openly to diſcloſe. That they are, however, the leſs credible from the want of an expreſs, poſitive declaration from the apoſtle, we ſhould not haſtily conclude, when we conſider (and I hope the conſideration will have its due weight) that the apoſtle was, by virtue of that extraordinary viſion vouchſafed to him—2 Cor. xii.---undoubtedly poſſeſſed of a fuller and more intimate knowledge of the myſteries of the goſpel diſpenſation, than he was permitted to *make known*. And that the diſcoveries then made, were of ſuch a nature, as greatly exalted the dignity of the Chriſtian œconomy, is evident, from that exceſs of vanity, to which the communication of them had well-nigh drove the apoſtle, and on account of which the meſſenger of Satan was ſent to buffet him.

That thoſe diſcoveries did *not* relate to a pre-exiſtent guilt, and a redemption, therefrom, by the death of Chriſt, there is no more proof (if ſo much) from ſcripture, than that they *did*. But whether our ideas of the Mediatorial diſpenſation are not tranſcendantly *exalted*, by viewing it through the medium of a ſuppoſed perſonal pre-exiſtent guilt and apoſtacy, inſtead of a *derived* Adamic treſpaſs and defilement, I leave to the hearts and conſciences of men to determine.

Ad. 2. Dr. Taylor, in order to prove that our Saviour lived and died only to redeem mankind from the guilt and puniſhment due to their perſonal treſpaſſes, here obſerves upon the underwritten texts of ſcripture *, quoted in the Aſſembly of Divines Catechiſm,

* Rom. iii. 10—20. As it is written there is none righteous, no not one. Ver. 11. There is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after God.

Catechiſm, as proofs of the " corruption of " man's nature, whereby he is utterly indiſpoſed, " diſabled, and made oppoſite unto all that is " ſpiritually good, and wholly inclined to all " evil, and that continually," as follows.

Obſ. 3: The ſection, ſays he, conſiſts of ſeveral quotations out of the old teſtament, called here *the law*, ver. 19. But, 1ſt, In none of them, taken ſeparately, doth the Spirit of God ſpeak of any *depravity of nature* derived from Adam, (granted) but manifeſtly of the habits of wickedneſs, which men had *contracted* by their *own* evil doings; as will, I think, undeniably appear, if you carefully peruſe the texts ſet over-againſt the proofs in the margin. And in Pſal. x. 4. the wickedneſs of the wicked is expreſsly ſaid, ſays he, to conſiſt in this, that he will not *ſeek after God.* And that *God is not in all his thoughts.* He might ſeek after God; but he will not. He hath thoughts; a power to think of God, but he doth not uſe it, p. 103. What immediately follows

Pſal. xiv. 1, 2, 3. Ver. 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one.

Pſal. v. 9. Ver. 13. Their throat is an open ſepulchre, with their tongues they have uſed deceit, the poyſon of aſps is under their lips:

Pſal. iii. 3. Ver. 14. Whoſe mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſs. Ver. 15. Their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood.

Pſal. x. 7. Ver. 16. Deſtruction and miſery are in their ways.

Prov. i. 16. Ver. 17. And the way of peace have they not known.

Iſa. liii. 7, 8. Ver. 18. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Pſal. xxxvi. 1. Ver. 19. Now we know that whatſoever things the law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

is ſo much to the doctor's diſcredit, as a reaſoner, that I wiſh it could be wiped out of his book. And is it not amazing, that one of Dr. Taylor's ſagacity and penetration, ſhould bring, all along, arguments in ſupport of his hypotheſis, which are ſo *apparently* ſubverſive of it.

The ſpirit of God, ſays he, does not, in either of the above-quoted texts, ſpeak of *any* depravity of nature (for that is in general his meaning.) How ſo? Why, he, the Spirit of God, alludes only to the wickedneſs which men had contracted by their *own* evil doings—and the Pſalmiſt expreſsly ſays, that the wickedneſs of the wicked conſiſted in this—that he will *not ſeek after* God, that *God is not in all his thoughts*—He might ſeek after God; but he *will not*, &c.

Now, if an *habitual*, *voluntary* propenſity to *evil doings*, a ſettled, determined abjuration of God implied in their *wilfully not* ſeeking him, be not evidences of the *depravity*, &c. of human nature, I know not what can, in the nature of things, be rationally deemed ſuch. Taking this therefore for granted, what ſtronger proofs need be required of the *depravity*, &c. of human nature, than what Dr. *Taylor* has above advanced? But to ſhew that the *texts of ſcripture*, there alluded to, are deſigned *declarations* of the depravity and corruption of man's NATURE, be pleaſed to attend to the following obſervations.

Dr. Taylor ſays (Obſerv. 2. p. 102.) "The apoſtle is not, in the above ſection, ſpeaking of all mankind, but a very ſmall part of mankind, viz. the Jews, who alone were then *under the law*, ver. 19. and he is proving from thoſe places, in their own approved writings (which places ſpeak *of* as well as *to* the natural *Jews*) that there were very great corruptions among them, as well

as

as among other people." But how does this quadrate with——God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that would understand and seek after God. But they are *all*, &c. &c. ? Psal. xiv. 3, 4. (I am sorry to see the doctor substituting *did* understand, for *would* understand.) It seems, in short, to me, very evident, that David speaks as *universally* in the above texts, with respect to the corruption of mankind, as Isaiah does in his 53d chapter—All *we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one his own* WAY ; *and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us* all, ver. 6. and that antecedently to the justification and regeneration to be observed by a true *operative* faith in Christ, the world, (in *general*, I mean) is, as it always was, abundant in corrupt propensions.

But again—The next proof urged by the Assembly of divines, in demonstration of the corruptions of human nature, is from Ephes. chap. ii. ver. 1, 2, 3. upon which, says Dr. Taylor—In these verses the apostle is describing the wretched and deplorable state of the Ephesians, while they were in GENTILE DARKNESS, in order to illustrate and magnify the grace of God in calling them to the knowledge and privileges of the gospel—and when he saith, they were dead in *trespasses* and *sins*, he plainly speaks of their own personal iniquities, &c.—committed through the darkness and *degeneracy* of their minds, *what inconsistency!* p. 108, 109. And then says he, when the apostle adds—*and were by nature the children of wrath*, he cannot mean, that they were liable to divine wrath or punishment *by* that nature which they brought into the world at their birth—for, as God's *hands have fashioned and formed us---every one of us*---to say the nature *He* gives is the hateful object of his wrath

wrath, is little leſs than blaſphemy againſt our good and bountiful Creator, p. 110—Very right; and the inference therefrom is manifeſtly this, viz. that, ſuppoſing the nature of man to be corrupt from his cradle, it could not come hither *immediately* from the hands of his Creator. But that men are *not corrupt* from their birth, and on that account *children of wrath*, he proves, In what manner? Why nature *here*, ſays he, may ſignify *really*, *properly*, *truly*. For obſerve τεκνα *children*, ſtrictly ſignifieth the genuine children of parents, by natural generation. But the word is uſed figuratively alſo, to denote relation to a perſon or thing by way of friendſhip, regard, imitation, obligation, &c. As the *children* of *God*, of the *kingdom*, the *bridegroom*, the *reſurrection*, of *wiſdom*, *light*, *obedience*, *peace*, &c. The *children of wrath* are they who are related to wrath, or liable to rejection and puniſhment. And whereas in thoſe days ſome were children in a lower ſenſe, by *adoption*; ſome in a higher, by *nature*, or proper generation; the apoſtle tells the Epheſians, they were *by nature* children; that is to ſay, children of wrath, or related to wrath, in the moſt real and *proper* ſenſe; as he is a child in the moſt real and proper ſenſe who is one *by nature*, p. 113.

If here, again, the doctor is not (ſophiſtry, I mean, apart) *quoting* and *proving* againſt himſelf, there is a myſtery in his reaſoning which I cannot comprehend. In fact, by the ἡμεν τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς the apoſtle can mean nothing more or leſs than, that they were by *birth*, or, in other words, by the *native*, *conſtitutional*, *unregenerate* frame of their minds, children of wrath; were as truly and *eſſentially* deſtitute of divine grace, and, as ſuch, objects of the divine wrath, as were thoſe counterfeit gods to which the Galatians did ſervice, Gal. iv. 8. (as the ſame apoſtle ſpeaks) φύσει *eſſentially no Gods.*

Ad.

Ad. 3. It having been aſked (p. 66. Sect. 14.) how, without ſuppoſing a prior connection with the apoſtate powers, it is poſſible to account for that *early* deflection in our primogenial parents from *moral rectitude*, by which they forfeited, in violation of the ſtrongeſt ties of duty, gratitude, and natural affection, their Maker's regard, involved themſelves and their poſterity in ſcenes of the deepeſt diſtreſs, and added freſh triumph to the too ſucceſsful diſturber of heaven's repoſe? What, but hearts already alienated from the love of God, could have yielded ſo very readily to the beguiling enticements of ſo open a traducer of God's authority, goodneſs, and juſtice? What but minds groſsly *depraved* in a *prior* ſtate could have given birth to ſo foul a procedure in their ſubſequent paradicial ſtate?———it may, in anſwer thereto, perhaps, be urged, that if our firſt parents obliquity in Eden, is neceſſarily to be aſcribed to a *pre-diſpoſition* of the mind to unrighteouſneſs, diſobedience, and impiety, not only theirs, but the *tempter*'s original lapſe likewiſe, in a ſuppoſed pre-exiſtent ſtate, muſt be allowed to ariſe from a ſimilar ſource; and that a *corruption of heart*, originally *infuſed*, or *naturally* contracted, will be found at laſt to have been the true and only foundation of moral evil ſtill.

To obviate which concluſion, it will be ſufficiet, I hope, to obſerve, Firſt, that though our firſt parents *early* deflection from moral rectitude *in Eden*, may reaſonably enough be aſcribed to a *pre-diſpoſition* of mind to unrighteouſneſs, impiety, &c. *then*, it does not therefore follow, that a ſimilar cauſe produced their *original* pre-exiſtent delinquency.

Enormous as were the lengths of impiety, and immorality into which *original ſin* by degrees branched forth, its root however, lay not in a wicked

wicked and perverſe diſpoſition, but in a weak and perverted imagination.

That *finite* beings may and muſt be *liable* to the *latter*, we cannot make any the leaſt doubt, without attributing to the *creature* (what can with propriety be aſcribed to the *Creator* only) an all-perfect and unerring wiſdom.

That a being, therefore, ordained by his Maker, as we may ſuppoſe the prince of the fallen powers was, to a precedency over one of the higheſt ORDERS in the regions of bliſs, cloathed with celeſtial majeſty and honour, having angels for his ſubjects, and moving in a ſphere of dignity, preheminence and glory, too exalted and enrapturing by far for human thought to conceive ---that a being, a *created* (and of conſequence a *frail*, *fallible*) being I mean, ſo dignified, ſo exalted, ſo highly favoured of heaven, ſhould be dazzled, as it were, with his own ſplendor, ſo as to loſe ſight at length of the great LUMINARY to which he ſtood indebted for his eximious luſtre—Is not this, I ſay, conceivable? Is it not poſſible? nay, and even probable? And might not a ſelf-admiration, too naturally reſulting from a fancied ſelf-conſequence, by inſenſible degrees lead to an imaginary ſelf-independency?

The *nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus* may be applied to angels as well as men. Nor can we, with any the leaſt foundation in reaſon, ſuppoſe but that the *firſt* fall was effected by *degrees* only; by incogitancy at firſt, which eaſily opened the way to ſelf-ſufficiency; ſelf-ſufficiency to independency, independency to open rebellion, to an open and avowed violation, I mean, of thoſe fundamental laws of heaven, piety and moral rectitude.

It

It appears then, 2dly, that that firſt *error* in the prince of the apoſtate powers, that ignus fatuus of the mind, *ſelf-admiration*, naturally leading a creature, *inſenſibly* deviating from the light of truth, into the pit of deſtruction, ſhould not be intercepted or removed, by ſome extraordinary illuminating aids from the ſupreme Being, we cannot wonder, when we conſider what a ſalutary leſſon of inſtruction it afforded to the reſt of the angelic powers, againſt ſelf-admiration and ſelf-ſufficiency, to which *all* were equally liable; and not only this, but that God had pre-ordained to *open a fountain for ſin and uncleanneſs* (the mediatorial œconomy, I mean) the ſalutary virtues of which are meant to be communicated not only to thoſe of *this* ſublunary world, who, through inadvertency, &c. may have been more or leſs *deluded* into an aſſociation with the apoſtate powers, but even to the apoſtate powers themſelves.

Whether this is or is not the moſt rational account of the introduction of moral evil *in heaven*, I muſt leave the impartial reader to determine.

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

LIFE AND DEATH

OF

ST. *JOHN* the *BAPTIST*.

BY GEORGE HORNE, D.D.

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PREFACE.

IT is a fine remark of Lord *Bacon*, that, "As wines, which, at firſt "preſſing, run gently, yield a more "pleaſant taſte than thoſe, where the "wine-preſs is hard wrought, becauſe "thoſe ſomewhat reliſh of the ſtone "and skin of the grape; ſo thoſe ob-"ſervations are moſt wholeſome and "ſweet, which flow from Scriptures "gently expreſſed, and naturally ex-"pounded, and are not wreſted or "drawn aſide to common places, or "controverſies."

OBSERVATIONS of this kind may certainly be made, to great advantage, on *hiſtorical* portions of Scripture more eſpecially; ſince, as the ſame incomparable author tells us elſewhere, "Knowlege drawn freſhly, and as it "were in our view, out of particulars, "knows the way beſt to particulars "again: and it hath much greater life "for practice, when the diſcourſe attends upon the example, than when "the example attends upon the diſcourſe; as *Machiavel* handled matters of policy and government, by "diſcourſes of hiſtory and example "taken from *Livy*." The doctrines and duties of Chriſtianity are, in like manner, beſt deduced from the facts on which it is founded. The narration furniſheth both matter and method for the diſcourſe, which is heard with pleaſure, and remembered with eaſe.

HISTORY

HISTORY and biography are frequently employed in the ſervice of error and vice. They may operate as effectually in the recommendation of truth and virtue. Example ſhews truth as it were embodied; and while it diſplays the excellency of virtue, demonſtrates its practicability. The contemplation of faith, as it diſcovereth itſelf in the lives of patriarchs and prophets, apoſtles and ſaints, inclineth us to believe as they did; and the ſight of frail mortals, like ourſelves, who, by the divine aſſiſtance, ſurmounted all obſtructions, and continued to walk in the paths of righteouſneſs, naturally ſuggeſteth, to every beholder, the queſtion — What ſhould hinder me from doing the ſame?

OPPORTUNITIES for ſuch exerciſes are continually afforded by the return of thoſe days, whereon we commemo-

rate the heroic piety of ancient worthies, diſtinguiſhed in the annals of religion; whoſe ſtory preſenteth us with occurrences, not, like thoſe related in ſecular hiſtories, of uſe only to politicians and generals, but univerſally intereſting; inſtructing us in the art of governing the little kingdom within; of atchieving the greateſt conqueſts, and gaining the moſt glorious victories; ſince "Better is he "that ruleth his ſpirit, than he that "taketh a city;" teaching us how to live the life, and die the death of the righteous; a twofold task, which every man hath upon his hands, and in the performance of which he cannot fail, but at the hazard of ſomething more valuable than crowns and ſceptres.

THE author of the following *Conſiderations* was directed, in the choice of

of his ſubject, by the circumſtances of his ſituation, ſome parts of them having been delivered from the pulpit, as occaſion called for them, in the chapel of St. *Mary Magdalen* College, upon the anniverſary of the nativity of St. *John* the Baptiſt, before a learned and moſt reſpectable audience. The favourable manner, in which they were then heard, hath encouraged him to reviſe, enlarge, and digeſt them into their preſent form. The reader hath now before him a compleat hiſtory of the Baptiſt, extracted from the Evangeliſts, and methodized according to the order of time, in which the events appear to have happened, with ſuch obſervations and reflections as the ſeveral parts of it ſeemed to ſuggeſt, for the confirmation of faith, and the advancement of holineſs.

AN attentive perusal of the subsequent pages may, it is hoped, be of service to the younger students in theology, with a view to whom, and to those more particularly of the Society, whose welfare and prosperity the author is bound by every tie to consult and promote, as they were at first composed, so they are now published; that, beholding the glories which display themselves in the exalted character here offered to their inspection, they may be fired with a noble ambition to bear their testimony to the best of masters, and, from a well spent retirement, come forth bright examples of temperance and purity, zeal and knowlege, integrity and constancy, to preach Repentance, and proclaim Salvation.

CON-

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CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

LIFE AND DEATH

OF

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

SECTION I.

Conſiderations on the nativity of St. John, *and the circumſtances that attended it.*

THE lights of the intellectual, like thoſe of the natural ſyſtem, are not all of equal magnitude and luſtre. In the church, as in the firmament, "one ſtar differeth from

SECT. I. "another star in glory." Each contributeth it's share towards dissipating the darkness with which we are surrounded; but some, by their superior splendor, immediately attract and dazzle the eye of the beholder. Conspicuous, above others, is the character of St. *John* the Baptist, that bright precursor of the sun, and harbinger of the morning, who arose to give notice of Messiah's approach, and to prepare the world for his reception: burning, and shining, he ran his course, proclaiming to the inhabitants of the earth, "Repent, for the kingdom "of heaven is at hand;" in other words, "The night is far spent, the day is at "hand; cast off therefore the works "of darkness, and put on the armour "of light [a]. Awake, thou that sleep-"est, and arise from the dead, and "Christ shall give thee light [b]."

PRAISE is ever valuable in proportion to the judgment and integrity of him who bestoweth it; and the panegyric is truly honourable, when the panegyrist is one who will not flatter, and

[a] Rom. xiii. 12.
[b] Ephes. v. 14.

who

who cannot be deceived. How then ſhall we raiſe our thoughts to conceive adequately of a perſon, whoſe encomium was ſpoken by the Son of God, and concerning whom that Son of God declared, "Among them that are born of "women there hath not ariſen a greater "than John the Baptiſt[a]." After this declaration made by the maſter, the diſciples cannot well be hyperbolical in their praiſes of St. *John*, as the great pattern of repentance; the relation of Chriſt; the friend of the bridegroom; the herald of the king immortal; the glory of ſaints, and the joy of the world. SECT. I.

IT is obſervable, that the Baptiſt's nativity is the only one (that of Chriſt excepted) which the church has thought proper to celebrate. The days appointed for the commemoration of other ſaints are generally thoſe on which they reſpectively ceaſed from their labours, and entered into their everlaſting reſt; the day of a good man's death being indeed the day of his birth, and this world no more than the womb in which he is formed and matured for his admiſſion

[a] Matt. xi. 11.

Sect. I. into a better, where there is neither crying nor pain. But the nativity of St. *John* being deſigned, by the remarkable incidents that accompanied it, to turn the eyes of men towards one who was far greater; one, the latchet of whoſe ſhoes he confeſſed himſelf not worthy to unlooſe; the church keeps a day ſacred to it, and directs us to begin our meditations by conſidering, as all *Judea* did when it happened, "what manner of child[a]" that ſhould be, which was ſo wonderfully born.

He whoſe works are all wrought in number, weight, and meaſure, bringeth every event to paſs in it's proper ſeaſon. The time approached which had been decreed in the counſels of the Moſt High, foretold by the Prophets, and ardently deſired by holy men of old, when the Son of God ſhould be manifeſted, to redeem his people from death, and to lead them in the path of life. As this redemption was not to be effected by fleſhly might and power, the ſpiritual king of *Iſrael* choſe to make his appearance, when the houſe of *Da-*

[a] Luke i. 66.

vid

vid was like a root buried in the earth; and therefore his forerunner was born "in the days of *Herod* the king[a];" days, when his countrymen were under a foreign juriſdiction, and the proſpect on all ſides was gloomy. True indeed it is, that the ſacred lamp went not out in the temple, where the good old *Simeon* and the devout *Anna* ſerved God inſtantly with faſtings and prayers, and waited, as many others did, with earneſt expectation, for the conſolation of *Iſrael*. They were not diſcouraged by the groſs darkneſs which then covered the earth, but rather concluded from thence, that the dawn of day could not be far off; as the mercies of heaven generally come when man moſt wants, and, humanly ſpeaking, has leaſt ground to hope for them; to the end that he may with thankfulneſs receive the benefit, and with humility give God the glory. And this may be an uſeful leſſon to thoſe who ſhall live in the latter days of the Gentile church, which are to precede the *ſecond* advent of Chriſt, when they will behold the religion of SECT. I.

[a] Luke i. 5.

Chriſtians

SECT. I. Christians degenerated into an empty form, and their zeal and love frozen at the fountain; when daily multiplying heresies, like the frogs in *Egypt*, shall infest and contaminate all things; when infidelity shall rage and swell, and iniquity of every kind shall abound. Sights like these may confound and stagger those who shall then be ignorant of the scriptures, and weak in faith. But an acquaintance with the divine dispensations will turn them into so many arguments for the truth of revelation, and the approach of the day of God. "When these things begin to come to "pass; then look up, and lift up your "heads, for your redemption draweth "nigh[a]:" then be found, with *Simeon* and *Anna*, in the temple, waiting for the consolation of *Israel*.

WHEN we read of men who have done good in their generations, and shone as lights in the world, curiosity naturally leads us to enquire after their connections and relations, and especially after the happy persons chosen to be the instruments of conveying such blessings

[a] Luke xxi. 28.

to

to the church. The ſcripture account of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth* is conciſe, but comprehenſive. He was "a prieſt "of the courſe of *Abia*," ſhe was "of "the daughters of *Aaron*," and "they "were both righteous before God, "walking in all the commandments "and ordinances of the Lord, blame-"leſs[a]. The courſe of *Abia* was the eighth in order of the twenty four courſes of prieſts appointed to relieve each other in the ſervice of the temple, where, during their miniſtration, they reſided in the chambers allotted them for that purpoſe; that ſo, being ſequeſtered from the cares and pollutions of the world, they might "wait on the "Lord without diſtraction," performing the outward ceremonies of the law, and exerciſing their faith in the contemplation of thoſe heavenly things ſhadowed out by them. This holy office *Zacharias*, in the worſt of times, adorned and beautified with a correſpondent holineſs of life. The ſpirit of the ſanctuary reſted upon him, and manifeſted itſelf in the fruit of righteouſneſs; a SECT. I.

[a] Luke i. 5, 6.

righteouſ-

Sect. I. righteouſneſs, which exceeded that of the Scribes and Phariſees, approving itſelf in the ſight of God, to whom are known the ſecrets of the heart, as well as in that of men, who are witneſſes only of the external deportment. Thro' the ſtrength of this ſpirit, he walked in the path of an uniform obedience, an invariable obſerver of thoſe ordinances which were at that time the ſacramental means and pledges of pardon and acceptance, through faith in him, of whoſe advent he was a devout expectant. From ſuch a father, and a mother worthy of him, who graced the line of *Aaron* by a like inviolable ſanctity of manners, was the Baptiſt to deſcend; that the *Jews* might have no poſſible objection againſt him; that he might be a proper forerunner of one who was to make all the world in love with the beauty of holineſs; that it might appear wherein true nobility of birth conſiſteth, *viz.* in a deſcent from perſons conſecrated to the ſervice of God, and of an exemplary piety; and laſtly, to aſſure us, that on the heads of thoſe, who to a holy profeſſion add a holy life, will,

will, ſooner or later, deſcend the choi- SECT. I.
ceſt bleſſings which heaven hath to be-
ſtow on the ſons of men.

BUT let not ſuch be impatient, be-
cauſe thoſe bleſſings are for a while de-
ferred. He, who ſends them, beſt
knows the proper time of ſending them,
and often ſees it neceſſary, for many
reaſons, to exerciſe the faith and patience
of his ſervants, who may always reſt
ſatisfied, that in due ſeaſon he will bring
every thing to paſs, which will con-
duce to their true welfare. The ſcrip-
ture, having witneſſed of *Zacharias* and
Elizabeth, that "they were both right-
"eous before God, walking in all the
"commandments and ordinances of the
"Lord blameleſs," proceedeth, in the
very next words, to inform us, that
"they had no child, becauſe that Eli-
"zabeth was barren, and they were both
"well ſtricken in years [a]." They who
ſtand higheſt in the favour of God, may,
therefore, during the greateſt part of
their lives, want the external and viſible
marks of it, and lie under the burden

[a] Luke i. 7.

Sect. I. of "reproach among men [a]," as was the case of childless women in *Judea*. But these two pious persons, when their condition, in this respect, seemed desperate, were upon the eve of felicity. For of parents at their time of life *John* was to be born; that so the miraculous manner of his birth might excite the attention of mankind, and dispose them to listen to his voice, when it should be heard in the wilderness; and also, that it might prepare them for that great event which was taking place, as the prophet *Isaiah* had foretold; "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son." In circumstances parallel with those of St. *John*, were born, of old, *Isaac*, and *Joseph*, and *Samson*, and *Samuel*, all of them illustrious forerunners of Messiah, in one or other of his three characters, prophetical, sacerdotal, or regal. And did not God intend, by so often causing "the barren woman to keep house, and "and to become a joyful mother of "children," to make that power known, by which the incarnation of the Redeemer and the fruitfulness of his church

[a] Luke i. 25.

were

were to be effected in the latter days, when, according to St. *Paul*, the prophetical injunction of *Iſaiah* was obeyed, "Sing, O barren, thou that didſt not "bear; break forth into ſinging, and "cry aloud, thou that didſt not travel "with child[a]!" SECT. I.

HE who is employed in diſcharging with fidelity the duties of his calling, takes the ſureſt way to obtain the continuation and increaſe of his heavenly Maſter's favours. A ſon was promiſed to *Zacharias*, "While he executed the "prieſt's office before God," as the ritual of the church enjoined, "In the "order of his courſe, and according to "the cuſtom[b]." The reflection of a pious writer upon this circumſtance is no leſs juſt than beautiful. "One prieſt "alone," ſays he, "intent on his duty, "who diffuſes the ſweet ſavour of "Chriſt, and is conſtant in prayer, "draws down on the people more bleſſ-"ings than a great number of negligent "prieſts. A man ought," continues he, "to diſcharge all the eccleſiaſtical func-

[a] Iſai. liv. 1. Gal. iv. 27.
[b] Luke i. 8, 9.

Sect. I. " tions with the ſpirit of the ſacred mi-
" niſtry, as *before God*, and under his
" immediate inſpection; to perform
" them *in order*, in his proper ſtation,
" without ambitiouſly ſeeking an high-
" er; to do nothing merely of his own
" will, but to obſerve the well eſta-
" bliſhed *cuſtoms*, as being the neceſſary
" ſecurities of peace. This is the truth
" which theſe ſhadows prefigured, and
" theſe the diſpoſitions worthy a mini-
" ſter of the true *temple*, which is the
" church."

THE annuntiation of the Baptiſt's conception happened at the time of incenſe, when his father, having put on the robe of honour, and being clothed, like the great Mediator whom he perſonated, with the garments of glory and beauty, entered into the temple, while the whole congregation of the people, aſſembled without, ſent up their united prayers to be accepted at the throne of grace, through the interceſſion which was then making for them by the levitical prieſt, acting in the name of him who was to " ariſe after the order of " Melchiſedek, and not to be called

" after

" after the order of Aaron[a]." While the joint prayers of prieſt and people were thus offered up with the blood of ſprinkling, and the ſweet-ſmelling ſavour of the holy incenſe, an angel ſuddenly appeared to *Zacharias*, as he was executing his office in the temple; that being the place to which thoſe bleſſed ſpirits, when they viſit theſe lower regions, ever delight to reſort, as bearing the neareſt reſemblance to the happy manſions from which they deſcend. SECT. I.

BUT whether it be, that the glory of celeſtial ſpirits overpowers the faculties of human nature, or that man, conſcious of having ſinned againſt heaven, naturally trembles at the ſight of a meſſenger from thence, we find, the appearance of an angel had the ſame effect upon *Zacharias*, the bleſſed virgin, and the ſhepherds: they were all " ſore " afraid." Their minds muſt be firſt compoſed, and put into a capacity of receiving the heavenly tidings brought them by the good angels, who, like good men, manifeſt themſelves by the gracious and encouraging manner of

[a] Heb. vii. 11.

their

Sect. I. their addreſs, and having removed all miſconceived apprehenſions, proceed to inſtruct and comfort thoſe to whom they are ſent. "Fear not, Zacharias, for "thy prayer is heard, and thy wife "Elizabeth ſhall bear thee a ſon [a]." *Zacharias* had prayed for the redemption of *Iſrael* by Meſſiah, and therefore was honoured by being made, in a wonderful manner, the father of his illuſtrious forerunner. The prieſt was anxious for the welfare of the church, and the man was bleſſed in his own private concerns. He ſought "firſt the king-"dom of God, and his righteouſneſs," and the bleſſing of a ſon was "added "unto him." --- "Thy wife Elizabeth "ſhall bear thee a ſon, and thou ſhalt "call his name JOHN," that is, being interpreted, the *grace*, or *gift*; "and "many ſhall rejoice at his birth:" not only thou ſhalt rejoice, and *Elizabeth* with thee, at the birth of a ſon ſo long deſpaired of, and ſuch a ſon too, but it ſhall be matter of joy, at the time, to all who look for redemption; and afterwards, thouſands and millions ſhall re-

[a] Luke i. 13.

joice

joice at the remembrance of it; the day shall be kept as a festival throughout all generations; with joy and gladness shall it be kept, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Encouraged by the example of *Zacharias*, let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, be never weary of waiting for his loving kindness in the midst of his temple. Let it be the delight of their lives to execute their office, every one in that order and station in which he is placed. So will God make them to hear of joy and gladness, and grant them to behold the success of their labours for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of his people. The church, like *Elizabeth*, shall bring forth fruit in her old age, and her friends shall rejoice greatly, when they hear that the Lord hath shewed mercy on her[a]. SECT. I.

DISTRUST of Providence, and the accomplishment of it's designs, when appearances are on the other side, will sometimes invade the hearts of the best of men; and *Zacharias* himself so far partook of the incredulous spirit which at that period had possessed the syna-

[a] Luke i. 58.

gogue,

Sect. I. gogue, that he "ſought after a ſign." --- "Whereby ſhall I know this? For "I am an old man, and my wife well "ſtricken in years." How different, in a parallel caſe, was the behaviour of his father *Abraham*, of which St. *Paul* has left us the following exalted deſcription. ---"Who againſt hope believed in hope, "that he might become the father of "many nations, according to that which "was ſpoken, So ſhall thy ſeed be. "And being not weak in faith, he con-"ſidered not his own body now dead, "neither yet the deadneſs of Sarah's "womb. He ſtaggered not at the pro-"miſe of God through unbelief, but "was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to "God, and being fully perſuaded, that "what he had promiſed he was able alſo "to perform[a]." The demand of *Zacharias*, however, was complied with, and a ſign was granted him in the puniſhment of his unbelief. The uſe of that tongue, which, inſtead of giving glory to God, had been employed in raiſing objections, was taken from him, and a

[a] Rom. iv. 18.

ſilence

silence of some months was imposed as a penance for the abuse of speech. SECT. I.

BUT when the wonderful child was born, who, even before his birth, entered upon his prophetical office, and gave testimony to his Saviour in the womb, then declaring, by his exultation, what he afterward did by words, "Behold the Lamb of God;" and *Zacharias* had acknowledged the GIFT of God, by directing that his name should be JOHN; then the mouth of the father was opened; and, to shew us the proper employment of the tongue, when heaven grants the use of it, he "praised "God." Faith restored what incredulity had taken away; "he believed, and "therefore he spake." And his heart having been prepared, by silence and retirement, for the reception of celestial influences, he was now "filled with the "Holy Ghost," and brake forth into that divine hymn, which shall be the subject of the next section.

SECTION II.

Conſiderations on the hymn of Zacharias.

SECT. II. AMONG the alterations in nature, which notify the return of ſpring, no one is more pleaſing, than the exchange of a long and melancholy ſilence, for that melody which then reſoundeth on every ſide of us, in the woods and fields. *Solomon* hath not forgotten this circumſtance, in his ſhort but lovely deſcription of that delightful ſeaſon. "Lo, the winter is paſt, the "rain is over and gone, the flowers ap"pear on the earth, the time of the "ſinging of birds is come, and the "voice of the turtle is heard in our "land[a]." The advent of Meſſiah was announced, in a ſimilar manner, to the church; and we may ſay of it, in the words of the Roman poet, which, like thoſe of *Caiaphas*, contained much more

[a] Cant. ii. 11.

than

than he was aware of who uttered them, SECT. II.

Aſpice, venturo lætentur ut omnia ſæclo!

For now, the bleſſed virgin "magni-"fieth the Lord, and her ſpirit rejoiceth "in God her Saviour:" the father of the Baptiſt "bleſſeth the Lord God of "Iſrael, for having viſited and redeemed "his people:" the angels themſelves deſcend in full choir, to perform an anthem in honour of their Lord and ours: and old *Simeon* cloſeth all with his affecting farewell to the world; "Lord, now "letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, "according to thy word; for mine eyes "have ſeen thy ſalvation." Thus did all "break forth into joy, and ſing to-"gether, becauſe the Lord had com-"forted his people, and redeemed Jeru-"ſalem;" becauſe the ſun of righteouſneſs, by his viſitation of the earth, was putting a period to a dreary winter, and introducing, in it's ſtead, a new and more glorious ſpring. And as ſpring is the *morning* of the year, *Cowley*'s addreſs to the material light, which is

SECT. II. but a faint copy, may be applied to the great original himſelf;

When thou lift'ſt up thy radiant head
Out of the morning's purple bed,
Thy choir of birds about thee play,
And all the joyful world ſalutes the
riſing day.

THE hymn which we are at preſent to conſider, is that of *Zacharias*. The occaſion on which it was indited, was the birth of St. *John*: the ſubject is the covenant of grace in Chriſt Jeſus: the language is that of the Old Teſtament, old terms being transferred to new things: the ſpeaker is a prieſt and a prophet, "Full of the Holy Ghoſt."

DURING a tedious interval of ſilence, *Zacharias* had beheld the accompliſhment of the divine promiſe to himſelf; and he knew likewiſe, that the Saviour of mankind would ſoon be born of his relation, the virgin *Mary*. We may judge, therefore, what pain and grief he felt, while reſtrained from uttering that "good matter," of which his heart was ſo full, that when at length God ſaw fit to remove the mound, it burſt forth

forth at once in an impetuous and irre- SECT. II.
fistible torrent of thanksgiving;

1. "BLESSED be the Lord God of
"Israel, for he hath visited and
"redeemed his people[a]."

IT was no new thing for "the God "of Israel" to "visit and redeem his "people." He had often done it, when they were in affliction and captivity. But *so* to visit and redeem, was not all that he intended to do for his chosen. Through things temporal he was desirous that they should look at things eternal, and carry on their views from a bodily to a spiritual *redemption*, in which all his counsels terminated; a *redemption* to be effected by his *visiting* mankind, dwelling among them in a tabernacle of flesh, and in that tabernacle offering up the true propitiatory sacrifice; a *redemption*, that should extend to Gentiles as well as Jews, and of both make one *people*, a new *Israel*, of which he should be *the Lord God*, for evermore. How gracious this *visitation!* How astonishing this *re-*

[a] Luke i. 68, &c.

demption!

SECT. II. *demption!* "Blessed be the Lord God "of Israel, for he hath visited and re- "deemed his people,

2. "And hath raised up an horn of "salvation for us, in the house "of his servant David."

IN the Old Testament, we read continually of Saviours and Deliverers "raised up" by God, to rescue his people, from time to time, out of the hands of their oppressors. But of them we may say, as the Apostle does of the Levitical priests, "They were not suf- "fered to continue, by reason of death[a]." And therefore, we may argue in one case, as he doth in the other, that none of them could be the true Saviour of *Israel*, the subject of the promises. Neither *Moses*, who brought them out of *Egypt*, nor *Joshua* who settled them in *Canaan*, was "He that should come," but they were still to "look for ano- "ther." And so on, through the whole calendar of temporal saviours, who, like the legal ministers, "served only,"

[a] Heb. vii. 23.

by

by their wars and victories, "to the "example and shadow of heavenly "things." The body, or substance, in either instance, "was of Christ." For he who arose "a Priest for ever," arose also "a King immortal;" a mighty *horn*, or *power* of salvation; a *Moses*, to deliver us from this present evil world; a *Joshua*, to put us in possession of the heavenly *Canaan*; in short, every thing, to fill up every prefigurative character. This mighty Saviour, this omnipotent king of *Israel* God raised up "in the "house of his servant David," as he had promised, "that of the fruit of his "body according to the flesh, he would "raise up Christ to sit on his throne [a]." And to this agree the words of the angel, at the annuntiation, "The Lord "God shall give unto him the throne "of his father David, and he shall "reign for ever and ever over the house "of Jacob, and of his kingdom there "shall be no end [b]." SECT. II.

[a] Psalm cxxxii. 11. Acts ii. 30.
[b] Luke i. 32.

3. "As

SECT. II.

3. "As he promiſed by the mouth "of his holy prophets, which "have been ſince the world "began ---"

IN a matter of ſo great conſequence as man's redemption, God left not the world without information, from the beginning: ſo that wherever we find ignorance, it muſt be charged to the account of man, as having rejected, and not to that of his Maker, as having denied the neceſſary means of inſtruction. We ſee the chriſtian church now ſupported, in her belief of Meſſiah's ſecond advent, on which all her hopes are fixed, by the diſcourſes of the Apoſtles, as the antient church was ſupported in her belief of his firſt advent, by the diſcourſes of the *prophets*. There is no more difficulty in one caſe than in the other. The ancients lived in faith, and ſo do we. They died in faith, "not having received the promiſes," and ſo muſt we: for though ſome promiſes are fulfilled, yet others are not, nor can be, in this world. Our know-

lege

lege is not the leſs certain, nor our faith, built upon it, the leſs firm, becauſe we have not exact and adequate notions of the manner of Chriſt's coming, the circumſtances of the laſt judgment, and the glory that is to follow. The *facts* are ſufficiently predicted; for an idea of the *mode* we muſt be contented to wait, till faith ſhall give place to ſight. And let the ſame obſervation be applied to the patriarchs and *Iſraelites*. SECT. II.

4. "--- That we ſhould be ſaved "from our enemies, and from "the hand of all that hate us."

THE *enemies* and the *ſalvation*, here intended by *Zacharias*, are, without doubt, ſpiritual. Such a ſalvation therefore, from ſuch enemies, God "promiſed by the mouth of his holy "prophets which have been ſince the "world began." When he ſaved his people of old from *their* enemies, and from the hand of all that hated *them*, his mercy ſo diſplayed was a figure for the time then preſent, a pledge and earneſt of eternal redemption; as if he

SECT. II. had ſaid, "Ye ſhall ſee greater things "than theſe." And the pſalms, formerly compoſed to celebrate the deliverance of *Iſrael* from *Egyptian* and *Babylonian* captivities, are now uſed by the church Chriſtian to praiſe God for ſalvation from ſin, death, and Satan: they are ſung *new* in the kingdom of Meſſiah. "Old things are paſſed away, be-"hold all things are become new:" legal figures are vaniſhed, and the terms employed to deſcribe them are transferred to Evangelical truths. When the prophets compoſed pſalms on occaſion of temporal deliverances, they looked forward to a future ſpiritual ſalvation; as *Zacharias*, in his hymn, the ſubject of which is a ſpiritual ſalvation, looks back, and has a reference to paſt temporal deliverances.

5. "To perform the mercy promi-"ſed to our fathers, and to re-"member his holy covenant --"

THE "mercy promiſed to our fa-"thers" was, therefore, a ſpiritual mercy; and the "covenant" made with them

them was a goſpel covenant; for other- SECT. II.
wiſe, God could not be ſaid, by raiſing up Chriſt, to have "performed that "mercy," and "remembered that co- "venant." Accordingly, we are elſe- where told, "the Goſpel was preached "to Abraham [a];" and the covenant made with him is ſtyled "the covenant "of God in Chriſt [b]." The Goſpel, then, was prior to the law, and was the patrimony of all the children of *Abraham*. "The law, which was four hun- "dred and thirty years after," whatever might be it's intention, could not diſ- poſſeſs them of this their inheritance; it could not "diſannul the covenant, "and make the promiſe of none effect." But if, on the contrary, it was deſigned to keep up, and further the knowlege of them; if it was a ſtanding prophecy; if it was "a ſchoolmaſter," by it's ele- ments training up and conducting it's ſcholars "to Chriſt;" then certainly no- thing was wanting on the part of God. The Jews minded earthly things; but to infer from thence, that they were never

[a] Gal. iii. 8.
[b] *Ibid.* 17.

Sect. II. taught the knowlege of things heavenly, would be a method of arguing too hazardous to be ventured upon; ſince, from the behaviour of many, who profeſs the Chriſtian religion, it might as fairly be concluded, that *their* Maſter promiſed nothing but "loaves and fiſhes." *Iſraelites* might ſet their hearts too much on "fields and vineyards," forgetting or neglecting better things, as men are apt to do, who are bleſſed with proſperity in this preſent world. But when they did ſo, they did wrong: prophets were ſent to reprove the error, and judgments to convince them, that *Canaan* was not the end of the "covenant," nor a plentiful harveſt "the mercy promiſed."

6. "The oath which he ſware to "our forefather Abraham ---"

The amazing condeſcenſion of God in vouchſafing, for man's ſatisfaction and aſſurance, to confirm his promiſe by an oath, is finely touched upon in the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*. "When "God made promiſe to Abraham, be-"cauſe he could ſwear by no greater, he "ſware

" ſware by himſelf, ſaying, ſurely bleſſ- SECT. II.
" ing I will bleſs thee, and multiplying
" I will multiply thee ---- For men
" verily ſwear by a greater, and an oath
" for confirmation is to them an end of
" all ſtrife. Wherein God, willing to
" ſhew to the heirs of promiſe the im-
" mutability of his counſel, confirmed
" it by an oath; that by two immuta-
" ble things, in which it was impoſ-
" ſible for God to lie, we might have
" a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled
" for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope
" ſet before us[a]." O the goodneſs of God, who hath given his creatures the aſſurance of an oath! O the infidelity of his creatures, who diſtruſt that aſſurance[b]!

7. " --- That he would grant unto
" us, that we being delivered
" out of the hands of our ene-
" mies, might ſerve him with-
" out fear,

[a] Heb. vi. 13.

[b] *O beatos nos, quorum cauſa Deus jurat! O miſerrimos, ſi nec juranti Domino credimus!* Tertull.

8. " In

8. "IN holineſs and righteouſneſs "before him, all the days of "our life."

THE promiſe, made with an oath to *Abraham*, was made, after the intentional ſacrifice of *Iſaac*, in the following terms; "By myſelf have I ſworn "--- that in bleſſing I will bleſs thee, "and in multiplying I will multiply "thy ſeed as the ſtars of heaven, and "as the ſand which is upon the ſea "ſhore; and thy ſeed ſhall poſſeſs the "gate of his enemies; and in thy ſeed "ſhall all the nations of the earth be "bleſſed [a]." The objects of the bleſſing here promiſed are the faithful children of *Abraham*, whether Jews or Gentiles; the "ſeed," in whom they are bleſſed, is Chriſt; the manner in which he obtains the bleſſing, is by "poſſeſſ-"ing the gate of his enemies," that is, by ſubduing them, and ſeizing their ſtrong holds; the bleſſing itſelf conſiſteth in a redemption from bondage under thoſe enemies, and an admiſſion into

[a] Gen. xxii. 16.

the

the ſervice of God. Such is the ſubſtance and intention of the promiſe made with an oath to *Abraham*, as explained by *Zacharias*, and fulfilled under the goſpel. In the mean time, between the promiſe and it's accompliſhment it pleaſed God to interpoſe a diſpenſation, which exhibited a viſible repreſentation of this great and important tranſaction, in the caſe of the children of *Iſrael*, or the poſterity of *Abraham* according to the fleſh, who, after having been long detained in cruel bondage by *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, were "delivered out of the hands of "their enemies;" and delivered for this purpoſe, that they might ſerve God with a prefigurative ſervice, calculated to laſt "till the ſeed ſhould come, to "whom the promiſe was made." For thus Jehovah ſaith to *Moſes*, "When "thou haſt brought forth the people "out of Egypt, they ſhall *ſerve God* "upon this mountain[a]." So that when, at the transfiguration of our Lord upon mount *Tabor*, *Moſes* diſcourſed with him on the ſubject of "his deceaſe,"

SECT. II.

[a] Exod. iii. 12.

or,

SECT. II. or, as it is in the original, his EXODUS, "which he ſhould accompliſh at Jeru-"ſalem," may we not imagine to ourſelves the deliverer of *Iſrael* addreſſing the world's Redeemer in ſome ſuch words as theſe --- By my hand the Lord God of *Iſrael* did once vouchſafe to bring forth his people from the afflicting bondage of *Egypt*; but thou ſhalt turn the multitude of the Gentiles from the power of Satan to God. I ſaw the Lord make a path through the waters, for his redeemed to paſs over; but thou ſhalt find a more wonderful way through the waves of death; and though the floods ſhall compaſs thee about, yet ſhall thy life be brought up from corruption. I beheld the chariots of *Pharaoh* and the mighty hoſt of *Egypt* plunging in the deep, when the morning appeared; but thou ſhalt triumph over principalities and powers, and ſee them overwhelmed in the lake of fire. I led my people through the wilderneſs, and gave them a law which had "the ſhadow of good "things to come;" but thou ſhalt conduct thine through the world, and teach them to "worſhip in ſpirit and

"in

" in truth." I went before *Iſrael* to the borders of the promiſed land; but thou art the true ſhepherd of ſouls, and they who follow thee ſhall " paſs from " death unto life." SECT. II.

Zacharias concludes his divine ſong with an apoſtrophe to the infant Baptiſt, as one who was deſigned by providence to be the precurſor of ſuch a Saviour, and the publiſher of ſuch ſalvation.

9. " And thou child ſhalt be called
" the prophet of the Higheſt,
" for thou ſhalt go before the
" face of the Lord, to prepare
" his ways;

10. " To give knowlege of ſalvation
" unto his people for the remiſ-
" ſion of their ſins ---"

" THE law *propheſied* until John," who ſucceeded it in it's office of pointing out the Meſſiah, and ſpake the language of it's inſtitutions, when he ſaid, " Behold the Lamb of God, which " taketh away the ſin of the world."

SECT. II. "Remission of sins" is the doctrine in which the Christian religion justly glorieth, as that most necessary and fundamental point, in which every other religion fails. The heathen confesseth himself to be in the dark; he guesseth only what is the will of God, whom he knoweth not. He hath not strength to perform what he imagineth to be such; and he understandeth not the meaning of the sacrifices and lustrations derived to him by tradition. The blood of bulls and goats cannot wash away the sins of the Jew; and his oblations, since the truth is come, which they were intended to prefigure, are preposterous, and impious. The Mahometan hath no evidence for the mission of his prophet, no argument for his religion but the sword, and no heaven but sense. The doctrine of "salvation "by the remission of sins," through faith in a Redeemer, was, from the beginning, the sum and substance of true religion, which subsisted in promise, prophecy, and figure, till *John* preached their accomplishment in the person of *Jesus*. Paganism was a corruption of it before

before that time, as Mahometiſm hath been ſince; and modern Judaiſm is an apoſtaſy from it. And will Chriſtians go away, and forſake their Redeemer? To whom can they go? He hath the words of eternal life: he only can give "ſalvation by the remiſſion of ſins." It is this religion which enlightens the underſtanding with true knowlege, and warms the heart with true charity: it is this which alone brings confidence, and comfort, and joy, and bids fear and deſpondency fly away: it is this which raiſes the ſoul, as it were, from the dead, puts new vigour into all her powers and faculties, and animates her to duty, by the powerful motives it ſuggeſteth: it is this which is a counterbalance to the temptations of ſenſe, by the promiſes made to our faith; which ſupports the infirmity of nature by the glorious objects propoſed to our hope; and which triumphs over the oppoſition of the world, by the love of God ſhed abroad in our hearts: it procures us the only ſolid happineſs there is in this world, and opens a way to the felicities of the next: it holds him out SECT. II.

SECT. II. to us, who is our "ſhield" on earth, and will be our "exceeding great reward" in heaven; who "guides us with his "counſel, and will, after that, receive "us to glory --- Whom have we in "heaven, O Lord, but thee; and there "is none upon earth we can deſire in "compariſon of thee[a]!"

11. "---Through the tender mercy "of our God; whereby the day-"ſpring from on high hath vi-"ſited us,

12. "To give light to them that ſit "in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow "of death, to guide our feet "into the way of peace."

St. *John* was the morning-ſtar, that preceded the ſun of righteouſneſs at his riſing; an event, the glory of which is due to "the tender mercy of our God," ſince towards the production of it man could do no more than he can do towards cauſing the natural ſun to riſe upon the earth. The bleſſed effects of the day-

[a] Pſalm lxxiii. 24.

ſpring

ſpring which then dawned from on high, and gradually increaſed more and more unto the perfect day, were --- the diſperſion of ignorance, which is the darkneſs of the intellectual world; the awakening of men from ſin, which is the ſleep of the ſoul; and the converſion and direction of their hearts and inclinations into "the way of peace," that is, of reconciliation to God by the blood of Chriſt, to themſelves by the anſwer of a conſcience cleanſed from ſin, and to one another by mutual love. "Happy is the people that is in ſuch a "caſe; yea, happy is the people, whoſe "God is the Lord. They are the "children of the light and of the "day. Their ſun ſhall no more go "down, neither ſhall their moon with-"draw itſelf; for the Lord ſhall be un-"to them an everlaſting light, and the "days of their mourning ſhall be "ended." SECT. II.

SEC-

SECTION III.

Conſiderations on St. John's *education in the deſarts.*

SECT. III.

ALL the information we have concerning St. *John*, from the time of his birth to that of his public appearance, is contained in the few following words --- "And the child grew, "and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit, and was "in the deſarts till the day of his ſhew-"ing unto Iſrael[a]." There, apart from the world, and under the tuition of heaven, he was catechized in the principles of divine wiſdom, initiated into the myſtery of a holy life, and perfected in the diſcipline of ſelf-denial;

The moſs his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the chryſtal well:
Remote from man, with God he paſs'd the days,
Pray'r all his buſ'neſs, all his pleaſure praiſe.

PARNELL.

[a] Luke i. 80.

THIS

THIS dispensation in the case of the Baptist, like many others relative to the prophets, was extraordinary and miraculous; consequently, not to be literally copied by any one, but in similar circumstances, and under a supernatural direction. Nor has the monastic scheme the sanction of so great an example; as St. *John* was under the obligation of no *vow*, but having finished his preparation in solitude, came forth to act his part upon the theatre of the world. And it is well known, that, even in those ages when mankind stood astonished at the austerities practised by recluses and eremites, the episcopal or sacerdotal character was reckoned as much superior to the other, as charity is better than contemplation. "In solitude," saith a great master of this subject, "a "man may go to heaven by the way of "prayer and devotion; but in society "he carries others with him by the "way of mercy and charity. In soli- "tude there are fewer temptations, but "then there is likewise the exercise of "fewer virtues. Solitude is a good "school, and the world the best theatre. SECT. III.

"The

SECT. III. "The institution is best there, the "practice here. The wilderness hath "the advantage of discipline, but so- "ciety furnisheth the opportunities of "perfection." To confirm this judicious state of the case, it may be observed, that the only perfect life which hath ever been led on earth, was a mixture of the solitary and social. Our Lord himself passed thirty years in the privacy of *Nazareth*, and then appeared in public to exercise his ministry; but still not without frequent intervals of retirement. "It was in solitude that "he kept his vigils; the desart places "heard him pray; in the wilderness he "vanquished Satan; upon a mountain "apart he was transfigured." But in public he preached the Gospel, and converted souls; in public he healed the sick, and cast out devils; in public he suffered, and, while he redeemed the world, set it a pattern of humility, patience, and charity.

FROM the circumstance of St. *John*'s education in the deserts we may, therefore, venture to draw a conclusion which will be of general use, with regard to all

all miniſters of the Goſpel, *viz.* that the ſolitary way of life is neceſſary to qualify them for the offices of the ſocial; or, that he who would ſerve God acceptably in public, muſt firſt prepare himſelf for that purpoſe in private. The reaſon is, becauſe no man is properly qualified to teach *wiſdom* and *holineſs*, who doth not himſelf poſſeſs them. And a little reflection will convince us, how needful retirement is for the acquiſition of both. SECT. III.

THE toils undergone by all who have ever made any great proficiency in *wiſdom*, plainly prove cloſe application and deep attention to be requiſite for it's attainment. And they who imagine themſelves to have diſcovered a ſhorter way, conducting them to it without ſtudy, will find, ſooner or later, that they have miſtaken their road. "Hardly "do we gueſs aright at things that are "upon earth, and with labour do we "find the things that are before us[a]:" ſhall we then expect a knowlege of thoſe which are of a high and ſpiritual nature, without any labour at all? The

[a] Wiſdom. ix. 16.

SECT. III. prophets themselves "enquired and "searched diligently what things the "spirit of Christ, which was in them, "did signify[a]." The royal Preacher, endued from above with "largeness of "heart as the sand upon the sea shore," yet took pains, and those no slight ones, in the invention and disposition of his discourses. For, "in order to teach the "people knowlege, he gave good heed, "and sought out and set in order many "proverbs; yea, the preacher sought "to find out acceptable words, words "of uprightness and truth[b]." And if *Solomon* were not exempted from study and meditation, no other man can have any title to hope for such a privilege.

BUT who shall be able to fix his attention, amidst the hurry and dissipation of life? Who can meditate on wisdom, with the noise of folly sounding incessantly in his ears? That blessed person, who could suffer no distraction of thought from the objects around him, withdrew from the multitude, that he might teach us to do the same, who,

a 1 Pet. i. 10.
b Eccles. xii. 9.

alas,

alas, are often unable, when alone, to confine our thoughts, for a few minutes together, to one ſubject. The world, like *Martha*, is "troubled about many "things," and moſt about thoſe which are of leaſt concern; ſo that, beſides the profane, the unſeemly, and uncharitable diſcourſes, which they muſt hear who are much converſant with it, the mind of a man ſuffers not a little from the variety of light and unprofitable converſation in which he is frequently engaged. This ſcatters the thoughts, and ſo indiſpoſes them for any ſpeculations that are great and noble, ſublime and ſacred, that ſome time is required to reduce the wanderers, to compoſe the ſpirits, and to reſtore that tranquillity of ſoul which is indiſpenſably neceſſary for the proſecution of religious enquiries. And although the general aſſertion of a famous recluſe, "that he always came out of company "a worſe man than he went into it," favoureth too much of the cloiſter, yet whoever, as the world goes, ſhould diligently note the times when he came out of company a *better* man than he went SECT. III.

SECT. III. went into it, might, perhaps, find his diary contained in a leſs compaſs, than at preſent he is apt to imagine.

CERTAIN, however, it is, that for the productions of wiſdom we are indebted to ſolitude, as the parent of attention. And therefore many, in all ages, have followed St. *John* into the wilderneſs, and choſen retirement, not out of any moroſeneſs of temper, or miſanthropy, but that they might give themſelves, without let or moleſtation, to the purſuit of divine knowlege. In this ſituation, they found themſelves always at liberty to chuſe their companions. They could converſe at pleaſure with patriarchs and prophets, apoſtles, martyrs, and confeſſors, with devout and learned biſhops, and others, who once adorned the church by their lives, and have continued, ſince their deaths, through many generations, to edify her by their writings. Here they could rally their ſcattered thoughts, and fix them upon ſubjects, whence they might extract real profit, and durable pleaſure. For meditations, while employed, in a general and curſory way, upon a variety of

of objects, like the rays of light diffused in the air, discover not the force and activity which they possess; it is close attention which collects and unites, and renders them operative. And an ability to bestow that close attention in a crowd, is granted to very few among the sons of men. SECT. III.

A DISPASSIONATE and unprejudiced state of mind is another requisite for the attainment of true wisdom. And as our sentiments take the tincture of our company, persons continually engaged in the world are very liable to be corrupted, as well as dissipated. He who passeth his time with men of base and antiscriptural tenets, will insensibly become one of them, and will find, when it is too late, that "evil communications "corrupt" good principles, as well as "good manners." The understanding will be blinded, and the heart hardened: wisdom will be shut out at every avenue; and the man will sit down in darkness and depravity, for the remainder of his days, determining with himself that there is no such thing as truth, without ever being at the trouble of making the enquiry.

SECT. III. enquiry. Happy, therefore, is he who, like St. *John*, ſpendeth his early days in privacy, and there acquainteth himſelf betimes with the excellencies and perfections of divine wiſdom. For "Wiſdom is glorious, and never fadeth "away; yea, ſhe is eaſily ſeen of them "that love her, and found of ſuch as "ſeek her. She preventeth them that "deſire her, in making herſelf firſt "known unto them. Whoſo ſeeketh "her early ſhall have no great travel, "for he ſhall find her ſitting at his "doors[a]."

UPON the ſame principle, we may account it one of the no ſmall advantages which St. *John* enjoyed by his retreat into the wilderneſs, that he was thereby delivered from the vain janglings of the many religious ſects and factions, at that time in *Judea*. For the authors and abettors of ſuch are naturally confined in their views, and obſtructed in their ſearch after truth, by having aſſumed it for a firſt principle, that "they are the men, and that wiſ-"dom muſt needs live and die with

[a] Wiſdom. vi. 12.

"them."

"them." Hence they become more SECT. III.
ſolicitous about the defence of their own particularities againſt thoſe of other ſectaries, than careful to advance and propagate the general principles of true religion. This hath been but too much the caſe for ſome time paſt in Chriſtendom, which, like *Jeruſalem* before it's deſtruction, is crumbled into innumerable parties, biting and devouring one another; inſomuch that it is now difficult for one writer to lay down a poſition in theology, which another ſhall not immediately ſet himſelf to controvert with all his might, as heretical and antichriſtian. The diſpute ſoon becomes a trial of ſkill, and the paſſions and prejudices of the combatants ſpread a cloud over the queſtion, in which truth and charity often vaniſh together. Thus dark and tempeſtuous are theſe lower regions. But, by ſtudy and meditation in ſolitude, the Chriſtian, in heart and mind, aſcendeth to a purer element, from whence he beholdeth the ſtorms produced by contending factions far beneath him, and expatiateth at pleaſure in thoſe fields of light and ſerenity, which

SECT. III. which open themſelves on all ſides to his view. He conſoleth himſelf by contemplating the church, as ſhe formerly ſubſiſted in original purity and unity, and as ſhe will hereafter exiſt in her triumphant ſtate above, when her members of every age and nation ſhall all lift up their voices together, and make their ſound to be heard as one, in giving Glory to God, and to the Lamb. Diſencumbered of paſſions and prejudices, he followeth after the truth which leadeth to godlineſs, and the wiſdom whoſe end is ſalvation.

FOR the attainment of that wiſdom a third thing requiſite is divine illumination. Wiſdom is one of thoſe "good "and perfect gifts," which "come "down from the Father of lights," and muſt be ſued for, with humility and fervour, in petitions like theſe---"Give "me wiſdom that ſitteth by thy throne, "and reject me not from among thy "children --- For though a man be "never ſo perfect among the children "of men, yet if thy wiſdom be not "with him, he ſhall be nothing re-"garded --- O ſend her out of thy holy "heavens,

" heavens, and from the throne of thy SECT. III.
" glory, that being preſent ſhe may la-
" bour with me, that I may know what
" is pleaſing unto thee. For ſhe know-
" eth and underſtandeth all things, and
" ſhe ſhall lead me ſoberly in my do-
" ings, and preſerve me by her power
" --- For what man is he that can
" know the counſel of God; or who
" can think what the will of the Lord
" is, except thou give wiſdom, and ſend
" thy Holy Spirit from above[a]?" Such gracious promiſes are made, and are ready to be fulfilled to the retired Chriſtian. Let but the pollutions and diſtractions of the world be removed, and the wiſdom which " is firſt pure, and " then peaceable," will enter in. To receive the law, *Moſes* was called away from the congregation to the top of the mount. *Ezekiel* beheld the viſions of God, while a ſolitary captive upon the banks of *Chebar*. *Daniel* was informed concerning the reſtoration of *Jeruſalem*, and the advent of Meſſiah, on the evening of a day dedicated to retirement, for the purpoſes of faſting and prayer.

[a] Wiſd. ix. 4.

SECT. III. St. *John* was an exile in the desolate *Patmos*, when the glorious scenes described in the book of Revelation were made to pass before him, and he was enabled to extend his view, through all the different revolutions of empires, and periods of the church, to the end of time. And although we no more look for visions and revelations from heaven, yet from thence we expect, according to the most sure promise of our Master, the gift of the Spirit, to bless and prosper us in our studies, to open to us the scriptures, and our understandings, that we may understand them. The same Spirit that gave the word, giveth likewise the interpretation thereof. And the latter, as well as the former, is best received in solitude, which appears to be thus admirably calculated for the attainment of *wisdom*, as it requireth study and attention, a dispassionate and unprejudiced mind, and that illumination which is from on high.

SIN, in the language of scripture, is styled *folly*, to intimate to us, that true *wisdom* and *holiness* are inseparable companions. That, therefore, which con-

conduceth to the acquisition of one, can never bear an unfavourable aspect towards the other; and solitude will be found the best nurse of *sanctity*, more particularly as it consisteth in the exercise of mortification. SECT. III.

THIS is a work which no man can set about, until he knoweth what those failings are, to which he is subject. And such is the power of self-love, that the person concerned is generally the last who comes to a knowlege of this most important point. If neither the fidelity of his friends nor the malice of his enemies let him into the secret, there is only a third way in which it is possible for him to become master of it, which is self-examination, constantly, sincerely, and thoroughly practised. And this requireth stated seasons of retirement; for want of which, we see those, who are engaged in a circle of business, or pleasures, living entire strangers to themselves and their own infirmities, though intimately acquainted with the follies and foibles of all around them. "In "the night," the psalmist tells us, he "communed with his own heart, and

SECT. III. "his ſpirit made diligent ſearch [a]." Then ſilence and ſolitude afforded him an opportunity of ſcrutinizing the tempers of his ſoul, of diſcovering the maladies to which he was inclined, and of applying the proper remedies to each.

THAT medicines may be adminiſtered with ſucceſs, it is neceſſary to cut off the proviſions, which nouriſh and increaſe the diſorder. The world, in the caſe before us, is full of ſuch proviſions; and therefore the patient muſt withdraw, for a while, from the influence of it's temptations. "Where "no wood is, the fire goeth out [b]." Remove the object, and the paſſion will by degrees die away. In ſolitude, the pleaſures and glories of the world no longer ſtrike upon the ſenſes, and ſolicit the affections. The ſoul, therefore, in this ſituation, like one eſcaped out of a battle to a place of ſecurity, hath leiſure to reflect upon her condition, and to provide for her future ſafety. By looking into herſelf, ſhe perceiveth how much ſhe ſtandeth in need of mercy

[a] Pſ. lxxvii. 6.
[b] Prov. xxvi. 20.

and

and grace; and then she is naturally led to look up to heaven, as the only place from whence they are to be obtained. The former of these prospects filleth her with compunction, and causeth her to mourn for her sins with that godly sorrow which worketh a repentance never to be repented of; the latter encourageth her to pour forth herself in continual prayer to the God of her salvation, until he have mercy upon her. St. *Peter*, when reminded of his offence by the crowing of the cock, and the affectionate look of an abjured Master, went out from the high priest's hall where he was, and in solitude, with strong crying and tears, made supplication for pardon and peace. In retirement it is, that we find ourselves best able to practise all the holy arts of abstinence and self-denial, so needful for the perfecting repentance by mortifying the whole body of sin. SECT. III.

WHEN men cannot be induced voluntarily to take this course, they are often forced into it by Providence visiting them with some heavy calamity, which by a stroke, like the amputation of

SECT. III. of a limb, ſevere but ſalutary, ſeparating them at once from the world, ſhall oblige them to converſe firſt with themſelves, and then with God. Thus was *Babylon*'s haughty monarch driven, in an extraordinary manner, from ſociety, to learn humility in the fields and woods, until he acknowledged the power and the righteouſneſs of the King of heaven. And thus the idolatrous and ſuperlatively wicked *Manaſſeh* became a ſincere and hearty penitent in the ſolitude of a *Chaldean* priſon. Nor can we but admire, upon this occaſion, the wiſdom and goodneſs of God in ſending ſickneſs, as a preparative for death. Sickneſs takes a man, as it were, out of this ſcene of things, to fit him for another. It draws the curtain between him and the world, ſhutting out all it's cares, and all it's pleaſures. It puts away his idle and noiſy acquaintance far from him; and having thus ſecured his attention to the one thing needful, gives him ideas of the nature of ſin, and the importance of death, the vanities of time, and the glories of eternity, to which he was before an utter ſtranger.

Now

Now appear to him, in their proper colours and natural deformity, the diabolical nature of pride and envy, the brutality of intemperance, the folly and torment of lasciviousness, the wretchedness of avarice, and the stupidity of sloth. Now he hath no longer any unlawful desires, and grieves that he ever had such. Now he is what he always ought to have been, and what retirement, at proper seasons, should and would have made him. SECT. III.

IN morality, as in husbandry, the preparation of the soil is a great step towards the production of a plentiful harvest. If carnal desires are dead in us, all things belonging to the Spirit will live and grow in us. If the affections are disengaged from things on earth, the difficulty of the work is over; they will readily and eagerly lay hold on things above, when proposed to them. If the snare of concupiscence be broken, and the soul be delivered out of it, she will presently fly away, on the wings of faith and charity, towards heaven. They who have duly practised mortification in the school of retirement, will,

at

SECT. III. at their appearance in the world, afford it the brighteſt examples of every thing that is "honeſt, juſt, pure, lovely, and "of good report."

WE may, therefore, conclude, that he who deſires to undertake the office of guiding others in the ways of *wiſdom* and *holineſs*, will beſt qualify himſelf for that purpoſe by firſt paſſing ſome time in a ſtate of ſequeſtration from the world; where anxious cares and deluſive pleaſures may not break in upon him, to diſſipate his attention; where no ſceptical or ſectarian ſpirit may blind his underſtanding, and nothing may obſtruct the illumination from above; where every vicious inclination may be mortified through grace, by a prudent application of the proper means; and every freſh bud of virtue, ſheltered from noxious blaſts, may be gradually reared up into ſtrength, beauty, and fragrance; where, in a word, "he may grow and "wax ſtrong in ſpirit, until the day of "his ſhewing unto Iſrael."

SEC-

SECTION IV.

Considerations on the Prophecies relative to St. John *in the Old Teſtament.*

BEFORE we proceed to view the Baptiſt in the exerciſe of his miniſtry, it will be proper to look back to the predictions in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, concerning his office and character. We ſhall begin with that remarkable one, "Behold, I "will ſend you Elijah the prophet, be- "fore the coming of the great and "dreadful day of the Lord. And he "ſhall turn the heart of the fathers to "the children, and the heart of the "children to their fathers, leſt I come, "and ſmite the earth with a curſe [a]." SECT. IV.

As there was amongſt the Jews a general expectation of Meſſiah's appearance, at the time when he did appear, ſo an opinion likewiſe prevailed, that the world ſhould be firſt prepared for his reception, in ſome extraordinary

[a] Mal. iv. 5, 6.

Sect. IV. manner. But wrong ideas of his appearance and kingdom introduced miſtakes with regard to the perſon who ſhould precede and proclaim him. According to the notions then current, occaſioned by applying to his firſt advent the prophecies which belonged to his ſecond, Meſſiah was to come in power and majeſty, to confer on the ſons of *Jacob* dominion over the Gentiles, and make *Jeruſalem* the metropolis of the world. And by miſunderſtanding this prediction of *Malachi*, they had imagined, that *Elijah* the *Tiſhbite* ſhould return from heaven, as his precurſor. For this reaſon it was, that when the ſanhedrim ſent a meſſage to St. *John*, deſiring to know, whether he were *Elias?* he anſwered, "I am not:" not the *Elias* by them intended and expected. But that St. *John* was the perſon foretold by *Malachi* under the name of *Elias*, we have the declarations of our Lord himſelf to his own diſciples, "Elias is indeed come[a];" and to the Jews, "If ye will receive it, this is "Elias which was for to come. He

[a] Mark ix. 13.

"that

" that hath ears to hear, let him hear[a]." SECT. IV.
By theſe expreſſions it was evidently Chriſt's intention to put his hearers upon the ſearch after ſomething more than the words, in the bare letter of them, might ſeem to contain. He directed them to go deeper into things, to ſtudy with attention the miſſion of the Baptiſt, his office and character; to compare together perſons, times, and events; and ſo to diſcover, in what ſenſe *John* was *Elias*, and why *Malachi* had given him that appellation. But if they did this, and were once brought, in the perſon of *John*, to acknowledge *Elias* who was to precede the Meſſiah, they muſt neceſſarily, in the perſon of *Jeſus*, acknowledge the Meſſiah whom *Elias* was to precede. And therefore, as they were obſtinately reſolved not to own the Maſter, Chriſt knew they would not recognize the ſervant, or *receive* this ſaying concerning him. Thus when the chief prieſts and elders interrogated our Lord in the temple, " By what au-
" thority doſt thou theſe things, or
" who gave thee this authority? I will

[a] Matt. xi. 14.

SECT. IV. "alſo," ſaid he, "aſk you one queſtion, "The baptiſm of John, was it from "heaven, or of men?" They perceived the dilemma, and having conſidered conſequences, made the only *ſafe* anſwer, "We cannot tell [a];" an anſwer which did honour to their prudence and their caution, but certainly at the expence either of their wiſdom, or their honeſty. As ſitting in the chair of *Moſes*, they ought to have known whence the baptiſm of *John* was; and if they did know, they ought not to have been ſhy of declaring it.

THAT St. *John* was the *Elias* predicted by *Malachi*, we have alſo the teſtimony of the angel [b], at the annuntiation of his birth, who cites the very words of the prophet; "He ſhall go "before him in the ſpirit and power of "Elias, *to turn the hearts of the fathers* "*to the children*" &c. And if this be the caſe, it follows by neceſſary inference, that by "the great and dreadful "day of the Lord," before the coming of which *Elijah* is promiſed, *Malachi*

[a] Matt. xxi. 23.
[b] Luke i. 7.

intends,

intends, primarily and immediately, the day, not of the world's, but of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction. For want of adverting to this, an opinion hath prevailed among Chriſtian interpreters, that the whole prophecy relateth principally to the day of judgment, and to the appearance of an *Elias*, who ſhall then precede Chriſt. Whether there will be ſuch an *Elias* at that time, and ſo the ſecond advent will ſymbolize with the firſt in the circumſtance of being previouſly proclaimed by a harbinger, like St. *John*, ſent for that purpoſe, is a ſpeculation with which we ſhall not at preſent concern ourſelves, reſting ſatisfied with the application of the prophecy, upon infallible grounds, to the perſon of the Baptiſt, the undoubted forerunner of our Lord, when he came to viſit us in great humility. SECT. IV.

GOD puniſheth not ſinners, till he hath firſt invited them to repentance. He giveth fair warning before he ſtriketh; and a day of grace, in which mercy may be ſought, and pardon found, always goeth before a day of vengeance and extermination. *Elias* was ſent "be-

"fore

SECT. IV. " fore the coming of the great and " dreadful day of the Lord;" *John* called his countrymen to turn from their ſins, and believe in their Meſſiah, e'er yet the deſolations of *Jeruſalem* exhibited to the wondering nations a ſpecimen of that almighty power and inflexible juſtice, which ſhall one day lay the world itſelf in ruins.

THE third chapter of *Malachi* containeth a moſt evident and clear prediction of Meſſiah's advent, with that of his precurſor St. *John*. " Behold, I " will ſend my meſſenger, and he ſhall " prepare the way before me; and the " Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly " come to his temple, even the meſſen- " ger of the covenant whom ye delight " in: behold he ſhall come, ſaith the " Lord of hoſts." The prophet goes on to foretell the effects of Chriſt's advent in the ſelection of a peculiar people, and the purification of a new prieſthood, to offer new and acceptable offerings. " But who may abide the day " of his coming, and who ſhall ſtand, " when he appeareth? For he is like a " refiner's fire, and like fuller's ſoap.

And

" And he ſhall ſit as a refiner and puri- SECT. IV.
" fier of ſilver; and he ſhall purify the
" ſons of Levi, and purge them as gold
" and ſilver, that they may offer unto
" the Lord an offering in righteouſneſs.
" Then ſhall the offering of Judah and
" Jeruſalem be pleaſant unto the Lord,
" as in the days of old, and as in for-
" mer years;" pleaſant as in the days when their fathers offered in faith, and the deſire of Meſſiah's appearance was the ruling paſſion of their ſouls. The reſt of the chapter is employed in reproving the rebellion, ſacrilege, and infidelity of the Jews; and the fourth chapter opens with a deſcription of the day fatal to *Jeruſalem* --- " Behold the
" day cometh that ſhall burn as an oven,
" and all the proud, yea and all that do
" wickedly ſhall be ſtubble, and the day
" that cometh ſhall burn them up, ſaith
" the Lord of hoſts, that it ſhall leave
" them neither root nor branch." For the conſolation of the faithful, God by his prophet again foretelleth Meſſiah's advent, with the increaſe, victory, and triumph of the church --- " But unto
" you that fear my name, ſhall the SUN

OF

SECT. IV. "OF RIGHTEOUSNESS arise, with "healing in his wings; and ye shall go "forth, and grow up as the firstlings "of bullocks: and ye shall tread down "the wicked, for they shall be ashes "under the soles of your feet, in the "day that I shall do this, saith the Lord "of hosts." In the mean time, "Re-"member ye the law of Moses my ser-"vant, which I commanded unto him "in Horeb for all Israel, with the sta-"tutes and judgments." And then, when the law hath done it's office, and prophesied for the appointed time, "Behold I will send you Elijah the "prophet;" not the personal Elijah, but, as the angel expoundeth it, one to preach and live after the model of his example, in his "spirit and power." Thus, in the prophecy of *Ezekiel*, where God foretelleth the union of *Israel* and *Judah* in the days of Messiah, he saith, "They shall be my people, and I will "be their God, and David my servant "shall be their prince for ever[a]." Not that Christ was to be *David* risen from the dead, or, when he came, was to

[a] Ezek. xxxvii. 23.

bear

bear his name, but was to be, in certain respects, like *David*, conquering the enemies, and sitting upon the throne of *Israel*. So the forerunner of Messiah was not to be *Elijah* descended from heaven, nor was he, at his manifestation, to be called by that name, but was to be like him in his office and character. Such a messenger, saith God, "I "will send, before the coming of the "great and dreadful day of the Lord," that is, the day that should "burn like "an oven," the day of *Jerusalem*'s destruction, mentioned in the first verse. "And he shall turn the heart of the "fathers to the children, and the heart "of the children to the fathers, lest I "come and smite the earth," or "the "land, with a curse." In the citation of this passage by the angel, one part of it is paraphrased --- "To turn the "hearts of the fathers to the children, "*and the disobedient to the wisdom of the* "*just*[a]." The meaning of the whole seems to be, either, that men of every age and every disposition should be united in truth and charity; or, as some SECT. IV.

[a] Luke i. 17.

I learned

SECT. IV. learned expoſitors underſtand the paſſage, that St. *John* ſhould bring many of the Jews to have the ſame heart and mind which their fathers and progenitors had, who feared God, and believed his promiſes; that ſo their fathers might, as it were, rejoice in them, and own them again for their children; in other words, that he ſhould convert them to the faith of that Chriſt whom their fathers hoped in, and looked for; as it was ſaid by the angel, "Many of the children "of Iſrael ſhall he turn to the Lord "their God[a];" left, all continuing obſtinate in their unbelief, till the day when a rejected Saviour ſhould viſit an apoſtate people, the curſe ſhould be univerſal.

BESIDES theſe notices afforded us by *Malachi*, there is a prophecy on the ſame ſubject in the XL[th] chapter of *Iſaiah*, to which St. *John* referred the prieſts and levites, when they preſſed him, ſaying, "Who art thou, that we "may give an anſwer to them that ſent "us? What ſayeſt thou of thyſelf? "He ſaid, I am the voice of one crying

[a] Luke i. 16.

"in

" in the wilderneſs, make ſtraight the SECT. IV.
" way of the Lord, as ſaid the prophet
" Eſaias [a]." But let us take a view of the whole context, as far as it concerns our preſent purpoſe.

ISAI. XL. 1. " Comfort ye, comfort
" ye my people, ſaith your God."

THE future manifeſtation of Chriſt's kingdom is repreſented to the prophet in ſpirit, with the concomitant ſigns and circumſtances of it. He hears the voice of God directing his ſervants to comfort his people, by proclaiming certain glad tidings which had been communicated to them. Theſe glad tidings were the tidings of the Goſpel. The perſons to whom they firſt came were *Zacharias*, the bleſſed Virgin, *Simeon*, and *Anna*, who compoſed ſacred ſongs upon the occaſion, and ſpake of Meſſiah's advent " to all ſuch as looked for redemption " in Jeruſalem [b]." The ſame tidings were afterwards publiſhed by the Baptiſt, then by Chriſt himſelf and his

a John i. 23.
b Luke ii. 38.

Sect. IV. apoſtles, and have been ever ſince preached by their ſucceſſors, whoſe commiſſion ſtill runs --- "Comfort ye, "comfort ye my people."

2. "SPEAK ye comfortably to Jeru-
"ſalem, and cry unto her, that
"her warfare is accompliſhed,
"that her iniquity is pardoned:
"for ſhe hath received of the
"Lord's hand double for all her
"ſins."

GOOD news ſhould be related with a ſuitable aſpect and accent. The manner ſhould correſpond with the matter. "Speak ye comfortably," or, as it is in the Hebrew phraſeology, "to the heart "of Jeruſalem;" let your words be as cordials, to revive and chear her in the midſt of her ſorrows and ſufferings. The topics of conſolation, to be inſiſted on, are three. Firſt, "Her warfare," or "appointed ſervice, is accompliſhed;" the days of her continuance under the yoke of bondage are expired; the fulneſs of time is come, for her paſſing from that ſtate into the glorious liberty of

of the ſons of God; ſhe will now be relieved from duty, and diſmiſſed from the ſtation on which ſhe hath ſo long watched, in expectation of the promiſed redemption; ſhe will be "delivered out "of the hands of her enemies, to ſerve "God without fear." Secondly, "Her "iniquity is pardoned;" the expiation is about to be made, which all her ſacrifices and luſtrations prefigured, which all her prophets foretold; the bleſſed perſon is born, in whom God is well pleaſed, both granting and accepting repentance unto "ſalvation by the re-"miſſion of ſins," that men may be "juſtified from all things from which "they could not be juſtified BY the "law of Moſes," although men were juſtified UNDER that diſpenſation, through faith in him that was then to come, according to the Goſpel preached before unto *Abraham*. Thirdly, "She "hath received of the Lord's hand "double for all her ſins;" ſhe hath received greater benefits than ſhe had deſerved puniſhments; mercy hath rejoiced againſt judgment; where ſin abounded, grace hath ſuperabounded. SECT. IV.

3. THE

SECT. IV.

3. "THE voice of him that crieth "in the wilderneſs, prepare ye "the way of the Lord, make "ſtraight in the deſart a high "way for our God."

ISAIAH, while reciting the divine injunctions to thoſe whoſe office it ſhould be to "comfort Jeruſalem," ſeemeth to break off ſuddenly, as one interrupted in his diſcourſe by the ſound of a voice. And as if he had liſtened, and perceived it to be the ſound of that voice which ſo many prophets and kings had deſired to hear, and had not heard it, viz. the voice proclaiming the actual incarnation of Meſſiah, he breaks forth in tranſport, "The voice of him that crieth "in the wilderneſs!"

Hark! a glad voice the lonely deſart chears;
Prepare the way! a God, a God appears.

The voice which thus ſounded in the prophet's ears, ſo long before it was really heard upon the earth, was that of

of the Baptiſt, who, at the proper ſea- SECT. IV.
ſon, was ſent, to diſpoſe the hearts and affections of men for the reception of their Saviour, when he ſhould make his appearance.

4. "EVERY valley ſhall be exalted,
"and every mountain and hill
"made low: and the crooked
"ſhall be made ſtraight, and
"the rough places plain."

THESE are the words of the prophet himſelf, unfolding the counſels of God concerning the manner in which Meſſiah's kingdom ſhould be eſtabliſhed in the world, and the alterations which muſt neceſſarily take place, in order to that end. "Every valley ſhall be ex-"alted;" to the poor in ſpirit, the lowly and contrite ſouls, the Goſpel ſhall be preached, and they ſhall be exalted in faith and hope ---"and every moun-"tain and hill made low;" on the contrary, pride of every kind, and in every ſhape, whether exalting itſelf in judaical phariſaiſm, or in gentile philoſophy, againſt the knowlege of God, ſhall be made

SECT. IV. made low, and ſubdued to the obedience of Chriſt: "and the crooked ſhall be "made ſtraight;" truth and rectitude ſhall ſucceed to error and depravity --- "and the rough places plain;" every thing that offendeth ſhall be removed, and all difficulties and inequalities ſmoothed, till unanimity and uniformity prevail. Thus ſhall the way be prepared for the King of Righteouſneſs to viſit his people, to dwell in them, and to walk among them.

5. "AND the glory of the Lord ſhall "be revealed, and all fleſh ſhall "ſee it together; for the mouth "of the Lord hath ſpoken it."

IMMEDIATELY after the proclamation and preparation made by the Baptiſt, the Divinity was revealed in human nature, God was manifeſted in the fleſh, ſeen and converſed with by all ranks and degrees of men, high and low, rich and poor, Jews and Gentiles, Phariſees and Saducees, publicans and ſinners. The accompliſhment of this part of *Iſaiah*'s prophecy is exactly related by St.

St. *John* the Evangeliſt, in the follow- SECT. IV.
ing terms; "The word was made fleſh,
"and dwelt among us, and *we beheld*
"*his* GLORY, the glory as of the only
"begotten of the Father, full of grace
"and truth [a]."

THUS we have ſeen under what character the Baptiſt is held forth to us in the predictions of the prophets concerning him, as one who ſhould go before Meſſiah in the ſpirit and power of *Elias*, to proclaim and prepare the way for the advent of God incarnate. How perfectly, during the courſe of his miniſtry, he filled up this character, will appear in the ſubſequent ſections.

[a] John i. 14.

SECTION V.

Considerations on the appearance, doctrine, and baptism of St. John.

SECT. V. THE days of St. *John*'s retirement were now ended, and he was to exchange the pleasures of contemplation for the far different scenes of an active life; to behold, with grief and indignation, the sins and follies of mankind, the sight of which must needs be more grating and afflicting to his righteous soul, than a garment of *camel's hair* could be to his body; to encounter the opposition of a world that would be sure to take arms against him, from the moment in which he stood forth a preacher of repentance and reformation. But no good could be done to others in solitude, no converts could be made in the deserts; and he must therefore quit even the most refined and exalted of intellectual enjoyments, as every minister of Christ should be ready to do, when

when charity dictates an attendance on the neceſſities of his fellow creatures. SECT. V.

YET let it be obſerved, that St. *John* was thirty years of age, when "the "word of God came to him in the wil-"derneſs [a]," and commiſſioned him to enter upon his miniſtry; and the holy Jeſus likewiſe was of the ſame age, when inaugurated to his office, by the viſible deſcent of the Spirit upon him at his baptiſm; to intimate, perhaps, that neither the exigences of mankind, nor a conſciouſneſs of abilities for the work, can be pleaded as a ſufficient warrant for a man to run before he is ſent, and take the ſacred office upon himſelf, without a regular and lawful call. The inſtitutions of God are not without a reaſon, and he will not be ſerved by the breach of his commandments.

THE place to which the Baptiſt firſt repaired is ſtyled "the wilderneſs of "Judea [b]," a country not like the vaſt and uninhabited *deſarts* in which he was educated, but one thinly peopled, a

[a] Luke iii. 2.
[b] Matt. iii. 1. Luke iii. 3.

Sect. V. comparative wilderneſs, choſen by him on account of it's bordering on the river. Hither the inhabitants of the neighbouring cities and villages preſently flocked in great numbers, attracted by the uncommon ſanctity of the new preacher, who thus came forth, on a ſudden, from the deſarts, like one from another world, without any connections in this, that no attachment might take him off from the duties of his high calling, or any way impede him in the exerciſe of it; ſince a man's worſt foes have often been thoſe of his own houſhold, and the ties of fleſh and blood have been known to prevail, where tyrants have threatened and inflicted tortures, without effect. And as there is nothing ſo directly oppoſite to the profeſſion of a prophet, nothing which ſo ſoon or ſo effectually ſullies his reputation, as a tendency to indulgence and ſenſuality; in him, who was "more "than a prophet[a]," we muſt expect to find a perfect crucifixion of the fleſh, with it's affections and luſts. "What "went ye out into the wilderneſs to

[a] Matt. xi. 9.

"ſee?

"see? A man clothed in soft raiment[a]?" SECT. V.
No, the very reverse; a man, like his predecessor *Elijah*, coarsly attired; "his "raiment of camel's hair, with a lea-"thern girdle about his loins;" and content with the plainest food that nature could provide for him; "his meat, "locusts, and wild honey[b];" a man, whose person, habit, and manner of life, were themselves a sermon, and the best illustration of the doctrine he was about to teach; a proper person to prepare the way for Christ, and introduce the law to the gospel; to shew men what effect the one ought to have upon them, in order to dispose them for the blessings of the other; that mercy might save from the wrath which justice had denounced, and Jesus comfort those whom *Moses* had caused to mourn.

THE actions of a prophet, who appears, like the Baptist, with an extraordinary mission, though they are not to be imitated by us according to the letter, may yet convey a moral of general use. There is no obligation upon

[a] Matt. xi. 8.
[b] Ibid. iii. 4.

us

SECT. V. us to be clothed with *camel's hair*, and to eat *locuſts and wild honey*, nor are we commanded to abſtain wholly from *wine*, as St. *John* did, according to the prediction of the angel concerning him, delivered at the annuntiation of his birth, "He ſhall drink neither wine nor "ſtrong drink, and ſhall be filled with "the Holy Ghoſt even from his mo-"ther's womb [a]." But who doth not here perceive, evidently marked out, the oppoſition between ſenſuality and the ſpirit of holineſs, and the impoſſibility of their dwelling together under the ſame roof? "Into a malicious ſoul "wiſdom ſhall not enter, nor dwell "in a body that is ſubject to ſin. For "the holy ſpirit of diſcipline will flee "deceit, and remove from thoughts "that are without underſtanding, and "will not abide when unrighteouſneſs "cometh in [b]." As, therefore, "no "man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, "but by the Holy Ghoſt [c]," who ſpeaks in the ſcriptures, who enlightens our

[a] Luke i. 15.
[b] Wiſd. i. 4.
[c] 1 Cor. xii. 3.

under-

understandings to interpret them, and who gives authority as well as ability to preach that great truth revealed in them, every minister of Christ, who succeeds the Baptist in the blessed work of calling men to salvation, should mortify the lusts of the flesh, that the graces of the Spirit may live and grow in him. SECT. V.

BY a thorough mortification of the flesh, St. *John* had gained a compleat victory over the world, which had nothing in it that he wanted. And herein consisted that *greatness* of his character foretold by the angel; "He shall be "*great* in the sight of the Lord[a]." Earthly pageantry engages not the attention of the spirits above, unless it be to pity such as set their hearts upon it. They discerned something more truly great in the person of the Baptist, when he came forth from the deserts, than in that of a triumphant monarch, at the head of his victorious army. "Behold," saith our Lord, "they that "wear soft clothing are in kings'

[a] Luke i. 15.

"houses[a];"

SECT. V.

"houſes[a];" look for them among the attendants upon the princes of this world, and not among my ſervants. They who thirſt after temporal honours and advantages, muſt go where ſuch things are to be had. And let them go any where, rather than come into the church, with theſe diſpoſitions. For he who would perſuade others to deſpiſe the world, while the love of it appears to direct and govern all his own actions, can expect no better ſucceſs than it may be ſuppoſed St. *Peter* would have met with, had he invited thoſe, who ſtood with him round the fire in the high prieſt's hall, into the ſervice of that maſter, whom they had juſt before heard him deny. "When thou art "converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren[b]:" attempt not to do it till then, leſt thou not only falleſt into condemnation thyſelf, but layeſt a ſtumbling block in the way of the weak, and cauſeſt the name of God and his goſpel to be thus blaſphemed through thy double-mindedneſs, while thy life is at variance with

[a] Matt. xi. 8.
[b] Luke xxii. 32.

thy

thy doctrine. He who undertakes to reprove the world, must be one whom the world cannot reprove. All eyes will be upon him; his actions, his words, his very gestures and looks will be observed and canvassed by his sharp sighted enemies. It will therefore behove one, so exposed on all sides, to abstain from the least appearance of evil, to stand at the utmost distance from temptation, and to prevent even the possibility of a suspicion. The ax must be laid to the root, and the passions mortified, till the man become, in the emphatical language of scripture, "dead to sin [a]," as a corpse is to the delights and concerns of life. "The dead know not any thing, "neither have they any more a portion "in any thing that is done under the "sun [b]." SECT. V.

STRANGE, therefore, as St. *John*'s appearance and manner of life might at first seem, they were presently explained, when he began to preach a doctrine harsh and distasteful to flesh and blood, as the garment he wore, and the food

[a] Rom. vi. 2.
[b] Eccles. ix. 5, 6.

Sect. V. on which he ſubſiſted. "Repent ye;" that is, Be converted, or changed, in heart and mind, in principle and practice, from error to truth, from ſin to righteouſneſs, from the fleſh to the Spirit, from the world to God; "for the "kingdom of heaven is at hand[a];" a new and heavenly kingdom is about to be ſet up amongſt you, with new and heavenly laws, under a new and heavenly king, the promiſed Meſſiah, and none but men of new and heavenly tempers and diſpoſitions can poſſibly become the ſubjects of it. I am the perſon commiſſioned to prepare you for your happy change, by calling you to repentance, and to my baptiſm which is "the bap-"tiſm of repentance, for the remiſſion "of ſins[b]," through faith in him "who "cometh after me," to confer pardon and forgiveneſs. I am the meſſenger foretold by *Malachi* and *Iſaiah*, ſent in this manner to prepare the way of him who is your King, your Lord, and your God, now ready to be revealed, as the Saviour of men. "Repent ye, for the

[a] Matt. iii. 2.

[b] Luke iii. 3.

"king-

"kingdom of heaven is at hand." Thus did St. *John* lay the foundations of the evangelical edifice in mortification and self-denial; nor did his blessed Master afterward propose the glories of a crown to any but those who should be ready to take up their cross in the way to them. SECT. V.

THE appearance of sanctity, put on by every impostor, is a proof of the influence, which it hath, when genuine and unaffected, over the minds of men. The preacher will always be attended, who conforms to his own doctrine, and exemplifies it in his life, be that doctrine ever so rigid. No sooner was it known, that *John*, the son of *Zacharias*, was come forth from the deserts, and had begun to preach, but "there "went out unto him Jerusalem, and all "Judea, and all the region round about "Jordan, and were baptized of him in "Jordan, confessing their sins[a]." The discourses of the Baptist were sharp and piercing as lancets. He applied them home to the human heart, swollen with pride, and full of iniquity. And indeed,

[a] Matt. iii. 5, 6.

Sect. V. much anxiety and wretchedneſs might be relieved, much deſpair and ſuicide might be prevented among us of this land, if the members of our church would but follow her direction, and as often as their minds were oppreſſed, and they could not quiet their own conſciences, go "to ſome diſcreet and "learned miniſter of God's word, and "open their grief, that they might re-"ceive the benefit of abſolution, to-"gether with ghoſtly counſel and ad-"vice."

The wiſdom and goodneſs of God are ſeen in his manner of proportioning his aids to the exigences of his people, and raiſing up reformers, when religion moſt needs their help, to revive the true ſpirit of it among men. If we view the ſtate of things in *Judea* at two different periods, we ſhall ſoon perceive how ſeaſonably *Elijah* was ſent at one time, and *John* the Baptiſt, that ſecond *Elijah*, at another. Each was an aera of diſtinguiſhed corruption, but corruption of a different ſpecies. During the former, idolatry was the faſhionable error, which had found it's way into the court,

court, and overſpread the face of the church. The characteriſtics of the latter were, on the one hand, a phariſaical hypocriſy, a boaſt of moral rectitude, which exiſted only in theory, and a vain confidence in a law which nobody obſerved; on the other, a Sadducean infidelity, oppoſed to the national faith and hope, denying a reſurrection, and future ſtate of retribution. *Elijah* reclaimed the people from the worſhip of Baal to that of the true God; *John* called his hearers from unbelief, hypocriſy, and vice, to faith and holineſs. SECT. V.

AN ambaſſador of heaven, ſent to preach truth to thoſe who are captivated by error, and righteouſneſs to thoſe who are enamoured of ſin, will never proceed far in the diſcharge of his truſt, unleſs he be endued with a fervent zeal for the cauſe and the honour of him that ſent him. Every holy perſon is not bleſſed with a ſpirit, any more than he is inveſted with a commiſſion, to appear in a public capacity, to reprove rulers and kings, to look an angry world in the face, and overcome all the oppoſition it can raiſe againſt him. Zeal, with-

SECT. V. without holineſs to ſupport it, like a meteor, will blaze and expire. Zeal, without knowlege to limit and direct it, will waſte and deſtroy, like the element from the effect of which it takes it's name, when that has burſt it's bounds, and rules where it ought to be in ſubjection. But when knowlege and holineſs are firſt obtained, it is zeal which muſt quicken and diffuſe them, as the ſun doth light and heat, for the benefit of the univerſe. "Then ſtood "up Elias the prophet as fire," ſaith the ſon of *Sirach*, "and his word burnt "like a lamp[a]." And our Lord, ſpeaking of the Baptiſt, gives this account of him, "He was a burning and a "ſhining light[b]." His zeal was tempered with knowlege, for it gave *light*; and his knowlege was actuated by zeal, for it was *burning* as well as *ſhining*. His ſermons came warm from the heart of the ſpeaker, and therefore found their way to that of the hearer, which was inflamed by them with the love, as

[a] Eccleſ. xlviii. 1.

[b] John v. 35.

his

his underſtanding was enlightened with the knowlege of heavenly things. SECT. V.

LET us view and compare together the zeal of *Elijah*, exerted before idolatrous *Iſrael* aſſembled at mount *Carmel*, and that diſplayed by St. *John*, when he ſaw the Phariſees and Sadducees come to his baptiſm.

FOR the ſins of the people, and the iniquities of the prince, in the days of *Elijah*[a], heaven was cloſed over their heads, the bleſſings of rain and dew were withheld till the divine author of them ſhould be again acknowleged, and famine ſtalked through the land, preaching repentance as ſhe went. *Iſrael* felt the wound, but owned not the hand that inflicted it. The Almighty had conſtituted the prophet his vicegerent, and enjoined the elements to ſecond him in the work of reformation. *Ahab* and his ſubjects, inſtead of conſulting *Elijah* about the removal of their calamities, regarded him as the occaſion of them, and the ſole "troubler of Iſrael." At the command of God, he preſents himſelf before the king, and tells him

[a] See 1 Kings xvii, & xviii.

plainly

SECT. V. plainly, "Thou art the man." *Iſrael* is convened at mount *Carmel*, and reproved. "Why halt ye between two opinions? "If Jehovah be God, follow him. But "if Baal, then follow him." The falſe prophets appear on the ſide of Baal and his kindred idols, to the number of nine hundred and fifty: on the ſide of the true God, *Elijah* ſtands ſingle. The trial is made, and the grand queſtion determined by a viſible token of the divine preſence. The nation returns to it's duty, idolatry is puniſhed in it's votaries, the heaven gives rain, and the earth brings forth her increaſe.

ON the banks of *Jordan* we behold, in the perſon of St. *John*[a], another *Elijah*, reproving the people of *Iſrael*, again departed from the Lord their God, while ſome, as the Phariſees, were hypocrites, and others, as the Sadducees, were unbelievers. Equally a ſtranger to fear and partiality, and endued with a prophetical power of diſcerning that ſerpentine ſubtlety and malignity which lurked under a ſpecious outſide, he rebukes them ſharply, if by

[a] See Matt. iii. 7, &c.

any

any means he might convince them of sin, and lead them to true repentance. "O generation of vipers, who hath "warned you to flee from the wrath to "come?" You, who seem to have taken possession of the inheritance, as if Messiah would never appear to claim it; you, who trust in yourselves that you are righteous, and despise others; come you to me, to be baptized with publicans and sinners? What can be the reason of all this? What can be your motive? The business in hand is not one to be trifled with. Hypocrisy has no place here; nor will the external shew, without the internal work, in this case, avail to any thing, but condemnation. "Bring forth therefore "fruits meet for repentance:" be not barren, but "bring forth;" bring forth not leaves only, or fair professions, promises, and designs, but "fruits," or good deeds; and such as may be "wor-"thy" of the tree on which they grow; such as may advance to maturity, and ripen into holiness. "And think not "to say within yourselves, We have "Abraham to our father:" many will

SECT. V.

SECT. V. hereafter ſay that, to little purpoſe. A deſcent from the loins of *Abraham* will profit none, but thoſe who are like *Abraham*. His true children are reckoned by faith, not conſanguinity. Imagine not that the favour of heaven is hereditary and indefeaſible in the line of *Abraham* according to the fleſh, or that the divine promiſes muſt fail, if not made good to you; "for I ſay unto you, that "God is able of theſe ſtones to raiſe up "children unto Abraham;" by the power of his grace he can make converts of nations at preſent utterly barren, unfruitful, obdurate, who ſhall inherit the bleſſing which you reject. Nor let the conſideration, that Meſſiah has ſo long delayed his coming, induce you to be careleſs and negligent: "for now "is the ax laid to the root of the tree:" believe me, he is at hand; your trial will ſoon be over, and your fate determined; the deciſive and irremediable ſtroke will be ſtruck, if not prevented by a timely repentance, a ſpeedy and real change of heart and manners; "every tree which bringeth not forth "good fruit ſhall be cut down and caſt "into

" into the fire." Hitherto God hath born with your errors and iniquities, but he will do ſo no longer. The law hath been given, and the prophets have been ſent; but they are not regarded; and therefore he is coming, after whom no other meſſenger is to be expected from above. He will be the Saviour of all, who, from a ſenſe of their ſins, ſhall be ready to embrace him as ſuch. I am not that perſon, but the leaſt and loweſt of his ſervants, ſent before to give notice of his approach, and prepare you to receive him. " I indeed " baptize you with water unto repent- " ance;" but it is he who muſt grant remiſſion of ſins repented of; " he that " cometh after me is mightier than I, " whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to bear;" he brings with him almighty power from on high, to pardon ſins, and confer grace; " he ſhall baptize you with " the Holy Ghoſt and with fire," to ſanctify your natures, to purify, enlighten, and inflame your hearts with the deſire and love of celeſtial objects. At his appearance, he will try and make manifeſt the tempers and diſpoſitions of SECT. V.

SECT. V. men. Deceit and hypocriſy ſhall not ſtand before him. "His fan is in his "hand, and he will throughly purge "his floor," ſifting and winnowing that which is good from that which ſeems to be ſo; "and he will gather his wheat "into his garner," tranſlate to heaven all that is pure, ſubſtantial, and fruitful; "but he will burn up the chaff," whatſoever is fallacious, light, empty, and barren, "with unquenchable fire," in hell.

SUCH a diſcourſe from ſuch a perſon occaſioned great ſearchings in the hearts of the people. They found all the vain opinions and preſumptions, on which they had been accuſtomed to rely, ſuddenly taken from them, and nothing left, but to put themſelves forthwith under the direction of ſo holy and heavenly a preacher. With fear and trembling they applied to him, as the affrighted gaoler afterwards did to *Paul* and *Silas*, ſaying, "What ſhall we do "then[a]?" And when a penitent will aſk advice of his ſpiritual guide, with a determined reſolution to follow it, he

[a] Luke iii. 10, &c.

is

is not far from the kingdom of God. SECT. V.
He is ſenſible of his diſeaſe; and that, in the maladies of the mind, is half the cure. St. *John*, in his anſwer, enjoins not legal, but evangelical ſacrifices, exhorting his converts to ſhew the ſincerity of their converſion by loving their neighbours, and relieving their neceſſities, as God had loved and relieved *them*. "He that hath two coats, let "him impart to him that hath none; "and he that hath meat let him do "likewiſe." Theſe works of feeding and clothing the poor, including all other acts of mercy under them, are mentioned, as being the moſt neceſſary and indiſpenſable; and he, ſays a pious writer upon this paſſage, who is not moved with his brother's miſery, deſerves to find God unmoved with his own.

AMONG others that came to be baptized, were ſome *publicans*, or tax-gatherers; a ſet of men, whoſe employment rendered them odious, as it often tempted them to court the favour of thoſe who employed them, or to gratify their own avarice, by fleecing the people.

SECT. V. people. These also were importunate with St. *John*, saying, "And what shall "we do? And he said unto them, "Exact no more than that which is "appointed you." The reflections of the writer above-cited, upon this case of the publicans, and the following one of the *soldiers*, are so extremely sensible, judicious, and pertinent, that the reader will have an obligation to me, for presenting him with them, nearly as I find them. "A wise preacher, like St. *John*, should distinguish the abuses of any state or condition of life from the condition itself; he should be so far from disturbing either the peace of private consciences, or the public repose, by condemning necessary employments, that he ought carefully to promote both, by contenting himself with only retrenching the disorders and injustice of those who exercise them. To be exact in not permitting any abuses in employments of this nature, is to serve the state: and those loose casuists, who allow and authorize them, are pernicious to governments, by rendering these employments odious to the people,

by

by favouring their murmurings, by encouraging acts of injustice, and thereby giving occasion to rebellion and revolt. SECT. V.

"And the soldiers demanded of him, "saying, And what shall we do? And "he said unto them, Do violence to no "man, neither accuse any falsely, and "be content with your wages." St. *John* here, in the last place, regulates the duties of military persons, and shews, that no condition is excluded from salvation. The business of war is not in itself at all opposite thereto; since there have been not only christian *soldiers*, but even great saints and generous martyrs of that profession. If all war was contrary to the gospel, St. *John* would not have allowed those who presented themselves before him to continue in that state. However it is certainly full of obstacles to salvation, which very few surmount. A state, which is generally embraced either out of passion, or libertinism, or through a blind destination of birth, the exercises whereof are so violent and tumultuous, agrees but little with the exercises of christianity, or the spirit of the gospel, which is all

peace,

Sect. V. peace, charity, and meekneſs. It is notwithſtanding juſt and neceſſary, that there ſhould be men to defend the ſtate; but it is ſtill more juſt and neceſſary, that this ſhould not be done at the expence of ſalvation. The grace of God can do every thing: this is what ought to comfort thoſe who intend to ſerve *him* in ſerving their king and country."

One cannot but obſerve the general agreement and harmony which ſeem to have prevailed, at this time among men otherwiſe of tempers and diſpoſitions very different from, and oppoſite to each other. Jews and Gentiles, Phariſees and Publicans, Sadducees and Soldiers, all confeſs their ſins, and participate of the ſame baptiſm, all ſtruck with apprehenſions of ſome impending evil, all flying from the wrath to come, forgetting their mutual hoſtilities and antipathies, and, like the creatures in the days of *Noah*, taking refuge together in the ark. As if the prophecy of *Iſaiah* had now begun to receive it's accompliſhment, the publicans, who, before the preaching of *John*, were ravenous as evening "wolves," became as innocent

nocent as the "lamb." The ſoldiers, who had been formerly fierce and cruel as the "lion," became tame and tractable as the "ox," and ſubmitted their necks to the yoke of the goſpel. Such of the Phariſees likewiſe, who, before their baptiſm, had been venomous as the "aſp," or "cockatrice," did, by the worthy receiving of this baptiſm, and the grace which God gave them, become mild and gentle as the "ſucking "infant," or "weaned child[a]." SECT. V.

THE concord thus produced in *Judea* by the ſermons of St. *John*, and the tranquillity which the whole earth then enjoyed, ſitting quiet as it were in expectation of her Lord, betokened the manifeſtation of the Prince of peace. "Then cometh Jeſus from Galilee to "Jordan to John, to be baptized of "him[b]." After thirty years paſt in retirement at *Nazareth*, the bleſſed Jeſus was now to break forth, like the ſun from a cloud, or a ſtream from the bowels of the earth, to enlighten man-

[a] See the Works of Dr Thomas Jackſon, ii. 522.
[b] Matt. iii. 13, &c.

SECT. V. kind by his doctrine, and refreſh them with the influences of his grace. The mighty concourſe of all ranks and degrees of people attending St. *John* at the river *Jordan*, rendered that the fitteſt place where he might firſt ſhew himſelf to the world. He who knew no ſin, but was to take away the ſins of all other men, preſented himſelf in the crowd of ſinners, as one of them, and ſolicited "the baptiſm of repentance," not that water might ſanctify him, but that he might "ſanctify water to the "myſtical waſhing away of ſin."

CONFOUNDED at the thought of the Maſter being baptized by the ſervant, St. *John* at firſt "forbad him, ſaying, I "have need to be baptized of thee, and "comeſt thou to me? And Jeſus an-"ſwering ſaid unto him, Suffer it to be "ſo now, for thus it becometh us to "fulfil all righteouſneſs. Then he ſuf-"fered him." Jeſus Chriſt, as condeſcending to ſtand charged with our ſins, and, to that end, being "made "under the law[a]," was to fulfil the "righteouſneſs" of the law, as it con-

[a] Gal. iv. 4.

ſiſted

SECT. V.

sisted in an obedience to ceremonial rites, as well as moral precepts. In the character and capacity of our substitute, he underwent circumcision, although he had no sin of his own to be cut off; and received baptism, although he had no pollution of his own to be washed away. What Christian can slight the ordinances of the church, when he sees the Redeemer, for his sake, submitting to observe them all?

No sooner was Jesus baptized, but he "came up straightway" out of the river, like another *Joshua*, leading his people, through the waters of *Jordan*, to the land of promise. And as he was "praying," doubtless for success in the great work he had undertaken, "Lo, "the heavens were opened, and the "Spirit of God," encompassed, we may presume, with a blaze of glory, "descended in a bodily shape like a dove," speaking better things than that of *Noah*. In this form, emblematical of innocence and purity, it "lighted," settled, and abode upon him, the Father thus consecrating him to his office, by "anointing him with the Holy Ghost

SECT. V. " and with power[a]," as the legal ministers were anointed with oil. And that no doubt might remain, the appearance was farther explained by " a voice from " heaven, saying, " This is my beloved " Son, in whom I am well pleased." Such are the blessings which, in effect, do always attend the divine sacraments, when duly administered, with prayer. For then the heavens are opened, and the Spirit is given, to conform us to the image of a meek and holy Saviour, and, through him, to make us acceptable in the sight of God.

[a] Acts x. 38.

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SECTION VI.

Conſiderations on the teſtimony born by St. John, *at different times, to the Meſſiahſhip of Jeſus.*

WHEN a ſervant of God, through the power of divine grace, hath made ſome proficiency in holineſs, and ſeeth the world and the fleſh under his feet, it is not uncommon for his third grand enemy, the devil, to ſet upon him, and prevail over him, by puffing him up with a conceit of his own excellency, and ſo rendering his very attainments an occaſion of his falling. The hurt which a man receives, in ſuch a caſe, is proportionable to the height from which he falls; as hell was firſt prepared for the tempter himſelf, becauſe he fell from heaven. SECT. VI.

IT is not, therefore, the leaſt conſpicuous part of St. *John*'s character, that a ſanctity ſo extraordinary was not in him accompanied with any degree of pride,

Sect. VI. pride, a worm which often cankers the faireſt fruits that grow in the garden of God. He heard his own praiſe echoed from every quarter, and "all "men," ſtruck with admiration at what was about to happen, "muſed in their "hearts concerning him, whether he "was the Chriſt[a]." Nay, the Sanhedrim, that they might be reſolved in ſo important a point, ſent a formal deputation of "prieſts and Levites from Je-"ruſalem, to enquire of him, Who art "thou[b]." As the Baptiſt was, at that time, in high repute among his countrymen, and as ſecular deſigns are ſometimes covered with ſpiritual pretences, it is not impoſſible, but that they might hope to flatter him into an acknowledgment of his being "ſome great one," and to frame of him a Meſſiah adapted to their purpoſes. But *John* was neither ambitious of an honour which did not belong to him, nor aſhamed of a Maſter, who was about to appear in the form of a ſervant. He took no glory to himſelf, but remitted it all where he

[a] Luke iii. 15.
[b] John i. 19, &c.

knew

knew it to be due. "He confeſſed, and "denied not, but confeſſed, I am not "the Chriſt. And they aſked him, "What then? Art thou Elias," that is, *Elijah* the *Tiſhbite*, whom they expected to deſcend from heaven? "And he "ſaith, I am not. Art thou ὁ προφήτης, "*the* prophet," meaning probably "Je- "remias, or one of the prophets," whom, as it appears by Matt. XVI. 14. the Jews looked for to ariſe from the dead. "And he anſwered, No." SECT. VI.

To all theſe enquiries, made by the prieſts and Levites deputed from the Sanhedrim, St. *John* returned anſwers which were true, but conciſe as poſſible, that they might take no advantage of his words, being aware that they grew envious of his fame, jealous for their own authority, and fearful of a Meſſiah, who would not anſwer their hopes, by gratifying their avarice and ambition. "Then ſaid they to him, "Who art thou, that we may give an "anſwer to them that ſent us? What "ſayeſt thou of thyſelf? He ſaid, I am "the voice of one crying in the wilder- "neſs, Make ſtraight the way of the "Lord,

Sect. VI. "Lord, as ſaid the prophet Eſaias." This was informing them plainly enough, that the prophecies were ſoon to be accompliſhed by the manifeſtation of Meſſiah, and that repentance, according to his doctrine and baptiſm, was the only preparation fit and neceſſary to be made, for the reception of their King.

"They who were ſent were of the "Phariſees," and conſequently could not reliſh tidings which put an end to all their ſchemes of temporal dominion, and earthly grandeur, inculcating, inſtead of them, the duties of mortification and ſelf-denial. This was not *their* ſyſtem; and many, in every age ſince, have been of the ſame opinion, not caring to receive Chriſt, unleſs he came to them with the world in his hand. Finding, therefore, that *John* had no vanity to be worked upon, they had recourſe to other meaſures, and began to diſpute his commiſſion to baptize; "They aſked him, and ſaid unto him, "Why baptizeſt thou then, if thou be "not that Chriſt, nor Elias, neither "that prophet?"

St.

St. *John*'s reply shews his own humility, and, at the same time, bears testimony to the dignity of Jesus. "I indeed baptize you with water;" my baptism, like my preaching, is preparatory only, leading to another baptism of the Spirit, which shall cleanse the souls of penitents from every thing that defileth, through faith in Messiah and his heavenly doctrine. And this Messiah is not afar off, as you may imagine him to be; "there standeth one among you, whom "ye know not;" he appears like other men, lowly, unattended, undistinguished; he doth not, as yet, think proper to manifest his power and glory; but hereafter you will find him to be far other than he seems. As to myself, of whom some are pleased to entertain an high opinion, I am nothing: "This is "he, who, coming after me, is pre-"ferred before me," as much as the greatest master is before the meanest of his servants, deemed unworthy to perform the least office about his person; "the latchet of whose shoes I am not "worthy to unloose." This testimony did St. *John* give to the Saviour of the SECT. VI.

SECT. VI. world, in the audience of the priests, and Levites, and the people, "at Betha-"bara beyond Jordan, where he was "baptizing." Intent upon humbling himself, that his great Lord and Master might be exalted, he declared himself a messenger only, sent to prepare his ways; and every thing in him, and about him, spoke the same language.

"THE next day," an opportunity offered itself of pointing out the person of Jesus to the people; "John seeth "Jesus coming unto him," probably, to acknowledge him as his friend, relation, and precursor; "and saith, Behold the "Lamb of God, which taketh away "the sin of the world:" Behold that blessed person prefigured in the law, and foretold by the prophets; one that is all meekness and innocence, patience and resignation, without offence in his mouth, without guile or malice in his heart, without spot or blemish in soul or body; the Lamb which *Abraham* told his son *Isaac*, that God would in time provide; the Lamb, by the sprinkling of whose blood, true *Israelites* are preserved from the destroyer; the sacrifice

crifice on which are laid the iniquities of us all; the Saviour who, by expiating, taketh away the ſin of the world, and conferreth righteouſneſs on them that will believe in him, and accept it from him, being conformed to his example of meekneſs and lowlineſs. This, O all ye that behold him, "this is he "of whom I ſaid, after me cometh "a man which is preferred before me, "for he was," he exiſted, ages "before "me," even from the beginning; he is fairer than the children of men, full of grace and truth, of divine glory, and celeſtial beauty. SECT. VI.

To guard againſt any ſuſpicion of colluſion[a] between two perſons, who, as relations, might be ſuppoſed to act in concert, and favour each other's pretenſions, St. *John* adds, "And I knew "him not, but he that ſent me to bap-"tize with water, the ſame ſaid unto "me, Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the "Spirit deſcending and remaining on

[a] See the impoſſibility of any ſuch colluſion fully demonſtrated by the Reverend Mr. *Bell*, in his exact and elaborate *Enquiry into the Divine Miſſions of John the Baptiſt and Jeſus Chriſt*.

SECT. VI. " him, the same is he which baptizeth " with the Holy Ghost."

FROM this passage we learn, that the visible descent of the Spirit was the sign given to St. *John*, whereby he was to know the Messiah. Jesus was brought up at *Nazareth*; and St. *John* was educated in the deserts; and it seems to have been so ordered by Providence, that no interview had passed between them, after they had arrived to years of maturity. When Jesus, therefore, came to be baptized, St. *John* had no knowlege of his person. But, probably, on making the enquiries, usual at baptism, into his profession, name, and place of abode, and finding likewise, that he had no sins to confess[a], as all others had, he saw reason sufficient to conclude, that this was the Christ; which might occasion his apology, " I have need to be " baptized of thee," &c. And then, when Jesus came up out of the water, the Spirit descended, and put the matter beyond all doubt. " I saw, and bare

[a] See *Annotations on St. John's Gospel*, by the Rev. Mr. Merrick, Part II. p. 50. and the Works of Dr. Jackson, by him referred to, Vol. II. p. 518.

" record,

" record, that this is the Son of God." SECT. VI.
So little account did these two wonderful perſonages make of their relation according to the fleſh. From their infancy they had not converſed together; and when they met, it was in public, that *John* might bear his teſtimony; ſoon after which, he was caſt into priſon, and ſaw Jeſus no more. An higher, more important, and durable connection, than any formed by conſanguinity, engaged his attention, as it ſhould do that of all Chriſt's diſciples, according to thoſe deep and divine ſtrains of St. *Paul*; " The love of Chriſt con-
" ſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge,
" that if one died for all, then were all
" dead; and that he died for all, that
" they which live ſhould not henceforth
" live unto themſelves, but unto him
" which died for them, and roſe again.
" Wherefore henceforth know we no
" man after the fleſh, yea, though we
" have known Chriſt after the fleſh, yet
" now henceforth know we him no
" more. Therefore if any man be in
" Chriſt, he is a new creature: old
" things

SECT. VI. "things are past away; behold, all "things are become new[a]."

THE Baptist, having now lived to see the Lord's Christ, and shew him to the world, was ready, like old *Simeon*, to depart in peace, and to make over his disciples to a better Master, who would never leave them, nor forsake them. "Again, the next day after, "John stood, and two of his disciples; "and looking upon Jesus as he walked, "he saith, Behold the Lamb of God." Happy the Christian minister, who, like St. *John*, lives only to point out the Saviour to his people. And happy the people, who, like the two disciples, thereupon follow Jesus, enquire where he dwelleth, enter in, and abide with him.

TO one of St. *John*'s disposition it could not but be matter of concern to find envy and jealousy stirring in the breasts of his disciples, on account of the increasing fame of Jesus, as being likely to eclipse that of their master. For on occasion of a dispute which had happened about purification by baptism

[a] 2 Cor. v. 14.

(disputes

(diſputes being ſeldom managed ſo as not to produce ill-will) "they came "unto John, and ſaid unto him, Rabbi, "he that was with thee beyond Jordan, "to whom thou beareſt witneſs, be- "hold, the ſame baptizeth, and all "men come unto him[a];" intimating, that *John* was in danger of loſing both his credit and his diſciples, by means of one, whom they took for a diſciple, like themſelves, as he had been baptized by the ſame maſter. So ready are men, at every turn, to form parties in religion, and to ſet up their reſpective teachers in oppoſition to each other; the conſequences of which are, that the hearers waſte that time in wrangling about a duty, which ſhould be ſpent in practiſing it; and the teachers, if they have not good hearts and ſteady heads, preach themſelves, inſtead of preaching Jeſus Chriſt. "All men come "to him!" Great hath been the power of this argument to kindle the flames of emulation and diſſention in the church; and the diſciples of *John* did not doubt but that the conſideration would excite SECT. VI.

[a] John iii. 26, &c.

in

Sect. VI. in him thoſe paſſions, which they felt working within themſelves.

But he was not framed of materials liable to take fire from ſuch a ſpark. On the contrary, a peruſal of the diſcourſe which this addreſs procured from him, is enough at any time to extinguiſh it, where it may have fallen. He made uſe of the incident, to bear his laſt and moſt noble teſtimony to the power and majeſty of his Lord. So far was he from being offended, or chagrined, becauſe all men reſorted to Jeſus, that he triumphed in it, as his glory and his joy, as the very end for which he was ſent into the world, to preach and to baptize. As if he had ſaid ---

Why are ye jealous, and why do envious thoughts ariſe in your hearts? Look not to me, or to any thing that is in me, but to God, who made me what I am, placed me in the ſtation, and called me to the office deſigned for me; "a man can receive," or take to himſelf, "nothing, except it be given him "from above." And ye know the character in which I have ever acted; "Ye "yourſelves bear me witneſs, that I "ſaid,

" ſaid, I am not the Chriſt, but that I " am ſent before him," as his meſſenger and miniſter, not to aſſemble diſciples in mine own name, but to prepare men for him, and direct men to him. If therefore ye ſet ſo much by my authority, why do ye not credit my teſtimony? To Meſſiah, not to me, the church is to be gathered and united; and " he " that hath the bride is the bridegroom: " but the friend of the bridegroom," who hath been honoured with a ſhare in bringing about ſo happy an event, and who, when it is brought about, " ſtandeth and heareth him" converſing with his ſpouſe, cannot therefore be grieved and vexed; he cannot envy the felicity of the bridegroom, or deſire to take the bride from him; but moſt aſſuredly congratulates with him, and " rejoiceth greatly becauſe of the bride- " groom's voice," finding that he hath ſo well ſucceeded in the work in which he was employed. This is my very caſe, when you come and tell me, that all men reſort to the perſon, of whom I have ſo often teſtified, that he is the Chriſt; " this my joy therefore is ful- SECT. VI.

SECT. VI. "filled." I have no greater pleasure than to hear, that disciples go from me to him. As the morning star, I only shone to proclaim the approach of the sun. Now he is risen, I go down; "he must increase, but I must decrease;" he will shine more and more unto the perfect day, while I shall set, and disappear. And reason good why it should be so. That which is preparatory must give place to that which is perfective; a baptism of water must yield to a baptism of fire; an human instructor must cede to one that is divine. "He that "is of the earth is earthly, and speak-"eth of the earth;" in spite of his best endeavours, he will savour of his original, and there will be an alloy of dust and ashes in all he saith; whereas "he "that cometh from heaven," I mean the blessed person of whom ye are so jealous, "is above all" the children of *Adam*. When this sun shineth in his strength, every star is obscured, and the world will perceive the difference between the discourses of the Master and those of the servant, as readily as it distinguisheth the glories of the day from the

the pale luſtre and faint glimmering of thoſe orbs, which ſerve in ſome meaſure to diſpel the darkneſs of the night. According to the grace given unto me, I have declared the kingdom of heaven to be at hand; but when Meſſiah ſpeaks of that kingdom, he ſpeaks from his own knowlege; "what he hath ſeen "and heard, that he teſtifieth;" and yet, though I have ſaid ſo much of him, and ſo many go to hear him, "no man "receiveth his teſtimony," as he ought to do. Think not this a ſlight matter, for no one can diſbelieve him, without giving God the lie; "he that hath re-"ceived his teſtimony, hath ſet to his "ſeal, that God is true," by allowing the credentials of his Son, and acknowledging in him the accompliſhment of what was foretold by the law, by the prophets, and by myſelf. "For he," the Meſſiah, "whom God hath ſent, "ſpeaketh the words of God," and that in a different ſenſe from all others, who, from time to time, have been endued with ſuch a portion of the divine influence as was meet for them; but "God giveth not the Spirit by SECT. VI.

SECT. VI. "measure unto him," having decreed, that in him should all fulness dwell. "For the Father loveth the Son," not as he loveth any of his faithful servants, but so as that "he hath put all things "into his hand," dispensing glory, honour, and immortality to mankind, through him alone. Be no longer envious and jealous, then, of his greatness, which is your salvation. If you would honour me, and at the same time serve your own eternal interest, receive, in few words, the sum and substance of this my last testimony ---- "He "that believeth on the Son, hath ever-"lasting life: and he that believeth "not the Son, shall not see life; but "the wrath of God abideth on him."

BY this part of St. *John*'s character and conduct, in how pleasing a manner are the ministers of Christ instructed, that they are to bear testimony to him, not to themselves; to seek his glory, not their own; that they should take pleasure in the success of their brethren's labours, by which the cause of their common Master is promoted; that the

the rising lights of the church should do honour to those who have gone before them, and the setting ones rejoice to be outshone by those who are coming after them; that envy and jealousy, in short, ought to have no place among the disciples of the Lamb of God, on whom descended and abode the celestial Dove. SECT. VI.

SEC-

SECTION VII.

Conſiderations on the impriſonment of St. John, *the meſſage ſent by him to Chriſt, and the anſwer returned to it.*

Sect. VII.

ADMIRABLE is the advice of the ſon of *Sirach* to every one who is about to ſtand forth in the cauſe of true religion. "My ſon, if thou come "to ſerve the Lord, prepare thy ſoul "for temptation. Set thy heart aright, "and conſtantly endure, and make not "haſte in time of trouble. Whatſo-"ever is brought upon thee take cheer-"fully, and be patient when thou art "changed to a low eſtate. For gold is "tried in the fire, and acceptable men "in the furnace of adverſity[a]." The reformer will proceed but a little way in his work, whoſe zeal is not backed with fortitude. The apprehenſion of danger, or even the frown of power,

[a] Eccleſ. ii. 1.

will

will alter his sentiments; he will see things in a different point of view, and turn with every blast of fashion or interest, till he himself believes every thing, and his hearers, offended and confounded, believe nothing. Sect. VII.

NOT so the Baptist. "What went ye "out into the wilderness to see? A reed "shaken with the wind[a]." No: a column firm and immoveable, against which winds might blow, and waves beat, in vain; one who had fixed his principles, and considered well, before he entered upon action; one who began not to build, till he had first counted the costs; but who, when once he did begin, would be sure to finish.

A PERSON unacquainted with the world, and the tempers of it's children, might, perhaps, be surprized upon hearing, that a prophet, like St. *John*, who spent his time in calling his fellow creatures to happiness and salvation, and who coveted no man's gold, or silver, or apparel, was cast into prison. But, as the wise man observeth, "The thing "which hath been is that which shall

[a] Matt. xi. 7.

"be,

Sect. VII. "be, and there is nothing new under "the ſun[a]." *Ahab*, at the inſtigation of *Jezebel*, again thirſts after the blood of *Elijah*.

HEROD, the tetrarch of *Galilee*, had put away his own wife, the daughter of *Aretas*, and had married *Herodias*, the wife of his brother *Philip*, whom, contrary to the laws of hoſpitality as well as religion, he had ſeduced, while a gueſt in her huſband's houſe[b]. The ſanctity and integrity of the Baptiſt had begotten, even in *Herod*, a great veneration and reverence for his character. "Herod feared John, knowing that he "was a juſt man, and an holy, and ob- "ſerved him, and when he heard him, "he did many things, and heard him "gladly[c]." But the matter of *Herodias* was a tender point, on which the tetrarch was not diſpoſed to hear the law, becauſe he was not diſpoſed to do it. He was determined to perſevere in what was wrong, and his monitor to perſiſt in telling him of it, without reſerve.

[a] Eccleſ. i. 9.

[b] See *Joſephus* --- Antiq. Lib. xviii. Cap. 6.

[c] Mark vi. 20.

"John

" John said unto him, It is not lawful Sect. VII.
" for thee to have thy brother's wife."
John, who had overcome the world, could not, either by promises or threatnings, be induced to recede from his duty, through hope of temporal good, or fear of temporal evil. He was therefore soon convinced, by being carried to prison, that *Herod* had no farther occasion for his service. And who doth not rather wish to have been imprisoned with him, than to have glittered in all the glories of the throne of *Herod*? Happy *John*, sequestered once more from a troublesome world, to converse with God, and to meditate on that blessed place, and that blessed company, to which he was now hastening!

IN this situation we find the thoughts of the Baptist employed not upon his own sufferings, but upon the interests of his great Master, the fame of whose miracles had reached the prison, and sounded in his ears. " When John had " heard in prison the works of Jesus, " he sent two of his disciples[a] ---" Thus the afflictions and tribulations

[a] Matt. xi. 2, &c.

Sect. VII. which a Christian must endure for a little season, in the world, should serve only to quicken his desires after his Redeemer, of whose works, wrought in mercy for the children of men, he will often hear; and the contemplation of them should afford him continual delight in the time of his captivity, until the day of his enlargement shall come. With *Paul* and *Silas* let him declare the glad tidings of salvation, and sing the praises of God in the prison-house. Let him enquire diligently, and take every opportunity of hearing more particulars concerning his Saviour, as also of placing others in the way of information. So will he copy the example of him, who, "when he heard in prison the "works of Jesus, sent two of his dis-"ciples," that they might be more fully instructed, as to his person and mission.

For that this must have been St. *John*'s intention in sending them, is plain from the question which they were enjoined to ask; "Art thou he that "should come, or do we look for an-"other?" The Baptist could not pro-

pose

pose this question for his own information, but evidently for that of his disciples, whose prejudices in favour of himself, their first master, he found it so difficult to conquer. What he had hitherto said having proved insufficient for that purpose, he now, in compassion to their infirmity, condescendeth to have their scruples propounded in his own name; affording us thereby a very useful hint, that in order to instruct others, we should abase ourselves, and know how to become weak with those who are so. For it often happens, that men need information upon some important point, who either thro' pride or bashfulness will not ask it, or through passion and prejudice will not receive it at our hands. In this case, the good, which we cannot do directly, we must contrive, if we can, to do indirectly, by proposing those questions ourselves, which we know that others in company want to hear answered, but cannot bring themselves to ask. This method of edifying the weak, without exposing their infirmities, will produce in them that love and confidence to- Sect. VII.

Sect. VII. wards us, which, for their own ſakes, we wiſh them to have. Whereas a contrary conduct, by provoking and alienating their affections from us, may put it out of our power ever to be of ſervice to them again.

THE ſame charitable plan is carried on by our Lord, who, in his anſwer, inſtructs the diſciples, by ſeeming to inſtruct their maſter; "Go (ſaith he) "and *tell John* what ye have ſeen and "heard." And this may ſuggeſt a reaſon, why Chriſtians in general ſhould converſe more upon religious ſubjects, than they are wont to do, both aſking queſtions, like St. *John*, and returning anſwers, like Chriſt, for the benefit and improvement of the by-ſtanders, who may need information, through the perſon to whom one immediately addreſſeth oneſelf, ſhould not. And many a man hath been the better, all his life after, for a ſeaſonable word ſpoken in common converſation, which is often more regarded and attended to, than a formal diſcourſe from the pulpit.

THE

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THE beſt proofs of a divine miſſion, which man is capable of receiving, are miracles, evidently and inconteſtably ſuch; miracles, of the reality of which the outward ſenſes, the eyes and the ears, are competent judges; miracles wrought publickly in the face of the world, in the preſence of enemies as well as friends; and that, not once, or twice, but repeatedly; and theſe miracles expreſſly predicted, hundreds of years beforehand. Such were the proofs offered by Chriſt to the diſciples of *John*. For "in that ſame hour," while they were preſent, and before their eyes, "he cured many of their infirmities and "plagues, and of evil ſpirits, and unto "many that were blind he gave ſight. "Then ſaid he unto them, Go your "way, and tell John what things ye "have ſeen and heard; how that the "blind ſee, the lame walk, the lepers "are cleanſed, the deaf hear, the dead "are raiſed, to the poor the goſpel is "preached. And bleſſed is he whoſo-"ever ſhall not be offended in me." As if he had ſaid; I bear not witneſs of myſelf; my miracles bear witneſs of me.

Only

Sect. VII. Only tell *John* what you have heard and ſeen, and he will teach you how to draw the proper inference. *Iſaiah*, as he well knoweth, did foretell, that when Meſſiah came, he would perform ſuch and ſuch mighty works. You yourſelves are eye and ear witneſſes of the works done by me. Lay the premiſes fairly together, and you cannot be to ſeek for the concluſion.

JOHN had engaged his reputation as a prophet, that Jeſus of *Nazareth*, whom he baptized in *Jordan*, would anſwer the character of Meſſiah, and do the works predicted of him; as appears from John x. 39. where we read, that Jeſus, having eſcaped from the Jews, "went again beyond Jordan, "unto the place where John at firſt "baptized; and there he abode. And "many reſorted unto him, and ſaid, "John did no miracle: but all things "that John ſpake of this man were "true. And many believed on him "there." Malice itſelf cannot find reaſon to ſuſpect a colluſion, when prophecies and miracles thus unite their teſti-

teſtimony, and proclaim Jeſus to be the Meſſiah. Sect. VII.

AT his word, "the eyes of the blind "were opened, and the ears of the deaf "unſtopped; the lame man leaped as "an hart, and the tongue of the dumb "did ſing[a];" the leproſy, that foul, contagious, and obſtinate diſeaſe, for which ſo many ceremonies of purification were appointed by the law, was healed at once; and the dead in their graves, hearing the voice of the ſon of man, came forth. Every malady and infirmity, to which the children of *Adam* were ſubject, vaniſhed at his preſence, and confeſſed the almighty deliverer of his people. This, therefore, is "He that ſhould come," nor let us think of "looking for another," to open the eyes of the underſtanding, and let in the light of heavenly knowlege upon ignorant and benighted minds; to remove all obſtructions, formed by intereſt, prejudice, or paſſion, and give us the hearing ear; to reſtore and invigorate the will and affections, that we may make large advances in the courſe

[a] Iſai. xxxv. 5, 6.

of

Sect. VII. of duty, and run with delight the way of God's commandments; to loose the tongues which guilt hath tied, and tune them to hymns of praise and thanksgiving; to cleanse us, by his blood, from all sin, that leprosy which excludeth from the congregation of *Israel*, the camp of the saints, and the beloved city; to raise our souls from death to life, and our bodies from dust to glory. "We have found him of whom Moses "in the law, and the prophets did "write --- Rabbi, thou art the Son of "God, thou art the King of Israel[a]!"

THERE is one particular in this answer of Christ, which remaineth yet unnoticed; "The poor have the gospel "preached unto them." Our Lord here referreth to the celebrated passage in *Isaiah*, which, in the synagogue of *Nazareth*, he had expounded, and declared to be fulfilled in himself. "The "Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, "because he hath anointed me to preach "good tidings," or the Gospel, "to "the meek," or poor; "he hath sent "me to proclaim liberty to the captives,

[a] John i. 45, 49.

"--- to

" --- to comfort all that mourn, to give Sect. VII.
" them beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy
" for mourning [a]," &c. The meaning of all the figurative expreſſions here uſed by the prophet, is this; that Meſſiah ſhould, at his appearance, confer upon ſuch as were diſpoſed to receive them, the two great evangelical bleſſings, viz. remiſſion of ſins, and a participation of the Spirit of joy and gladneſs, with which God had " anointed " him above his fellows." The inauguration of Jeſus to all the offices of the Meſſiah, by this divine unction, *John* had beheld, when, after his baptiſm, he ſaw the Holy Ghoſt deſcending upon him, and thereby knew him to be that " Rod," or " Branch of Jeſſe," on whom *Iſaiah* had elſewhere foretold, that " the " Spirit of the Lord ſhould reſt [b]." Nothing therefore could be more appoſite, than this part of Chriſt's anſwer, " The poor have the Goſpel preached " unto them;" the full import of which, conſidered as referring to the LXI[ſt] chapter of *Iſaiah*, and addreſſed to St. *John*,

[a] Iſai. lxi. 1.
[b] Ibid. xi. 1, 2.

Sect. VII. is as followeth --- Go shew John again, that the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of might and counsel, which *Isaiah* foretold should rest upon the Rod and Branch of Jesse, and which *John* saw descending and abiding upon me, in the likeness of a dove, at my baptism, is not departed from me. The unction of the Spirit was not given me for mine own use; nor is it spent, or consumed, although it hath powerfully diffused itself to all about me. By it the poor are made rich, being instated in the kingdom of grace and of the gospel, and anointed heirs unto the kingdom of glory. By it every contrite heart is healed; such as were shut up are set at liberty; such as were bound are loosed; and by it the yoke of the oppressor is broken [a].

We must not omit to mention the *end* for which, according to the prophet, all these changes were wrought in the converts to the Gospel; "That "they might be called Trees of Right-"eousness, the planting of the Lord,

[a] See the Works of Dr Jackson, Vol. ii. p. 542.

"that

" that he might be glorified." The " Rod," the " Branch of Jeſſe," the " Righteous Branch of David," were the known titles of the Meſſiah, or Son of David; and it was his glory, while he lived upon earth, to make others, like himſelf, " Trees," or " Plants of " Righteouſneſs." This expreſſion, as it ſtandeth here joined with others plainly deſcriptive of evangelical benefits and comforts, unfoldeth to us the true nature of thoſe wonders which *Iſaiah* foretold ſhould be wrought in the wilderneſs, and which he hath repreſented under ſo rich a variety of poetical imagery; ſuch as, ſtreams of water breaking forth in the deſarts, cauſing them to bloſſom as the roſe; myrtles coming up, inſtead of briars; cedars, firs, and olive trees, inſtead of thorns, &c. The purport of theſe figurative predictions appears, by the paſſage before us, to be this; that the dry and barren places of *Judea*, where *John* baptized, and preached repentance, ſhould, in the days of the Meſſiah, become a fruitful nurſery of a new kind of plants, prepared for the celeſtial pa- Sect. VII.

Sect. VII. radiſe. Theſe were men of humble, peaceable, contrite hearts; ſuch as poverty and diſeaſe had rendered thoſe who came to be healed by Chriſt, and the conſideration of our ſins and infirmities ſhould render us all. To ſuch is the goſpel of the kingdom preached, and they with joy receive it. "Bleſſed "are the poor in ſpirit; for theirs is "the kingdom of heaven. Bleſſed are "the meek; for they ſhall inherit the "earth. Bleſſed are they that mourn; "for they ſhall be comforted."

To theſe beatitudes let us add one more, with which our Lord concludeth his anſwer to the queſtion aſked by *John*'s diſciples. "Bleſſed is he whoſo-"ever is not offended in me." In other words ---- And now, bleſſed, thrice bleſſed are all they, who ſhall ſo conſider the wonderful works done by me, as not to be offended at my poor and lowly appearance, during the time of my humiliation and ſuffering here on earth; or at the ſeeming harſhneſs of my ſalutary doctrines to fleſh and blood. For I well know, that many, though they have beheld me giving ſight to the blind,

blind, and vigour to the impotent, cleanſing lepers, making the deaf to hear, and raiſing the dead to life again; yet, becauſe the truths, which I deliver, are contrary to their intereſts, their pleaſures, their pride, their prejudices, which they are determined not to quit, even for the kingdom of heaven; many, I ſay, will reject what they cannot but acknowledge to be the counſel of God, and put away the word of ſalvation from them. Let a man only ſuppreſs his inordinate deſires of things temporal, and he will be diſpoſed to hear what I ſhall tell him of things eternal. Let him ceaſe to love the world, and he will ceaſe to have any objection to the Goſpel. Let but his heart be open to conviction, and when the evidence hath been once fairly laid before him, he will never again aſk the queſtion, "Art "thou he that ſhould come, or do we "look for another?" Sect. VII.

SEC-

SECTION VIII.

Conſiderations on the circumſtances of St. John's *Death.*

Sect. VIII. WE have now accompanied St. *John* through the ſeveral ſtages of his life. We have rejoiced with his parents and kinsfolk at his birth, and ſpent ſome time in contemplation with him in the deſarts; we have ſtood by him, as a preacher and a baptiſt, at the river *Jordan*, and have been made acquainted with the repeated teſtimonies born by him, at different times, to the Meſſiahſhip of Jeſus; we have heard him, like another *Elijah*, reproving another *Ahab*, and have viſited him in priſon, where the glory of his great Maſter, and the ſalvation of thoſe committed to his care, ſtill continued to be the objects of his attention. It remains only, that we behold him paying that debt to nature, from which the greateſt of them that are born of women are not

not exempted. And here our acquaint- Sect. VIII.
ance with him must end, till we meet
him in the kingdom of God. Thus do
scenes of real life pass swiftly away,
and, when looked back upon, appear
like those which are described within
the compass of a small volume like this.
In the course of a few years, the child,
at whose birth we made merry, is be-
come a man; he sickens, and dies, and
we mourn at his funeral. Some gleams
of success and prosperity, perhaps,
brighten and adorn certain parts of his
life, as the sun gilds the edges of a dark
cloud, or imprints upon it the still more
beautiful colours of the rainbow. But
while we gaze, the sun sets, the colours
fade, the bow vanishes, and "the place
"thereof knoweth it no more."

OF prophets, as well as of kings, it may be observed, that there is generally but a short interval between their imprisonment and their death; the enmity which occasioned one, seldom leaving them, till it have accomplished the other. And "more bitter even than death it-
"self is the woman whose heart is
"snares

Sect. VIII. "snares and nets, and her hands bands[a].
Herod had thrown *John* into prison
but this would not satisfy *Herodia*
Even there she heard him still preach
ing upon the old text, and reproachin
her with her crimes. "She had a quar
"rel against him; ενειχεν αυτω, *she fa*
"*tened upon him*, and would have kill
"ed him, but," for some time, sh
"could not[b]." For though *Herod* ha
not religion enough to produce in hi
the fear of God, he had policy enoug
to produce the fear of the Jews, amon
whom *John*'s reputation, as a prophe
ran very high. *Herodias*, however, i
her heart, had determined to effect he
purpose by procuring, sooner or late
the execution of him whom she falsel
deemed her enemy. As if sin could n
be committed with impunity, whil
John was living to hear of it; as if h
blood would not cry louder than h
voice had done; or the head of th
prophet could enter the palace, witho
reproving the adultery of the tetrarch
But an imperious lust, in the height o

[a] Eccles. vii. 26.
[b] Mark vi. 19, &c.

it

's career, can brook no obſtruction; and were it poſſible, as well as neceſ- ary, the world itſelf would be blown p to make way for it. Sect. VIII.

SIN being once reſolved on in the eart, an opportunity of committing it is eldom long wanting; and the mind is pon the watch, to embrace the very rſt that offers. "When a convenient "day was come, that Herod's birth day "ſhould be kept, he made a great ſup- "per to his lords, high captains, and "chief eſtates of Galilee." It is cer- ainly no ſin in a prince to keep his irth day, or to make a great ſupper pon it. But how much it behoveth a an, at ſuch times of rejoicing, to be pon his guard, leſt unawares he be in- luced to ſacrifice truth and conſcience o mirth and gaiety, the melancholy ca- aſtrophe of this banquet may ſerve to hew us; ſince neither *Herod*, nor any of his gueſts imagined, when they ſate down to table on that fatal evening, ow horribly their great ſupper would conclude. But ſo it happened, that, before the night was out, a deed was done, which diſplayed to all ſucceeding

Sect. VIII. generations the malice and cruelty of *Herodias*, with the weakneſs and wickedneſs of *Herod*; teaching us, at the ſame time, that the greateſt of prophets and the beſt of men are not more ſecure from violence, than from natural death, but rather more expoſed to it than the reſt of mankind, if with fidelity and fortitude they execute the truſt committed to them.

HERODIAS, by her lawful huſband *Philip*, had a daughter named *Salome*, who condeſcended to grace the feſtivity by dancing before the company, in a manner which "pleaſed Herod, and "them that ſat with him." A pious prelate of our church, in his contemplations on this occurrence, obſerves, that "dancing, in itſelf, as it is a ſet, "regular, harmonious, graceful motion "of the body, cannot be unlawful, any "more than walking, or running." We may add, that it hath in all ages and nations been one way, and that a natural one, of expreſſing an uncommon degree of joy and gladneſs; on which account it was adopted into the number of religious ceremonies formerly enjoined

joined to be obſerved by the people of God. But for a young lady to appear, as a dancer, before *Herod* and his "lords, "high captains, and chief eſtates of "Galilee," probably, when they were well warmed with wine, became only the daughter of an *Herodias*, educated by her own mother. Sect. VIII.

HEROD, quite overcome and thrown off his guard by *Salome*'s performance, makes her a fooliſh promiſe; and, as if that was not enough, confirms it with a raſh oath; "Whatſoever thou ſhalt "aſk of me, I will give it thee, to "the half of my kingdom." A very handſome recompence, one would think, for a dance! But it will appear preſently, that the king had not offered enough. Half his kingdom would not do. Something was required more valuable than the whole of it, had it extended from *Judea*, quite round the globe. Nothing would ſatisfy, but his honour, his conſcience, his ſoul; the price which ſin never fails to aſk! The glorious golden opportunity of revenge was not to be loſt. *Herodias* is conſulted

Sect. VIII. by her daughter, and lo, the ſoft, tender, delicate *Salome* reenters, all athirſt for blood --- "Give me in a charger "the head of John the Baptiſt;" of a prophet; of a perſon whom thou knoweſt to be innocent, holy, upright. Make me this ſacrifice, and I am content. With ſuch eagerneſs and ſagacity does "the adultereſs hunt for "the precious life!"

BAD as *Herod* was, the petition of *Salome* at firſt ſhocked him. "The king "was ſorry." He thought of *John*'s character, the atrociouſneſs of the murder, and the opinion which the world would entertain of the murderer. But the tide, which had ebbed, ſoon flowed again, and obliterated, in a moment, what had been written on the ſand, during it's receſs. The love of *Herodias*, the addreſs of *Salome*, the feſtivity of the ſeaſon, and the preſence of the "lords "and high captains," who had been witneſſes of the promiſe, and might poſſibly approve the propoſal; all theſe circumſtances on the ſide of the temptation prevailed. And perhaps, *Herod*, upon recollection, might think that the ſuppoſed

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ſuppoſed obligation of his oath would afford him a better excuſe than he ſhould ever be maſter of again, for complying with the importunity of *Herodias*, and taking off a monitor troubleſome to them both. "For his oath's ſake, and for "their ſakes which ſat with him, he "would not reject her." Thus, if any extraordinary wickedneſs is to be tranſacted, religion muſt be made a cover for it. As if wrong became right, when acted in the name of God; and it were more acceptable in his ſight, to maſſacre a prophet, than to repent of a raſh oath made to a fooliſh girl, at a drunken entertainment.

THE Baptiſt's fate being thus determined, "immediately the king ſent "an executioner, and commanded his "head to be brought: and he went "and beheaded him in the priſon." This deed of darkneſs muſt have been done in the ſeaſon proper for it, the middle of the night, and St. *John* was probably awakened, to receive his ſentence, out of that ſleep, which truth and innocence can ſecure to their poſſeſſor, in any ſituation. The generality

of

Sect. VIII. of mankind have reason enough to deprecate a sudden death, lest it should surprize them in one of their many unguarded hours. But to St. *John* no hour could be such. He had finished the work which God had given him to do. He had kept the faith, and preserved a conscience void of offence. He had done his duty, and waited daily and hourly, we may be sure, for his departure. He was now, therefore, called off from his station with honour, to quit the well fought field for the palace of the Great King; to refresh himself, after the dust, and toil, and heat of the day, by bathing in the fountain of life and immortality; to exchange his blood-stained armour for a robe of glory, and to have his temporary labours rewarded with eternal rest; to sit down with *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the kingdom of God; and, as the Friend of the Bridegroom, to enter into the joy of his Lord. From the darkness and confinement of a prison he passed to the liberty and light of heaven; and while malice was gratified with a sight of his head, and his body was carried by a few friends

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in ſilence to the grave, his immortal ſpirit repaired to a court, where no *Herod* deſires to have his brother's wife; where no *Herodias* thirſts after the blood of a prophet; where he who hath laboured, with ſincerity and diligence, in the work of reformation, is ſure to be well received; where holineſs, zeal, and conſtancy "are crowned and receive palms from the Son of God, "whom they confeſſed in the world[a]." Sect. VIII.

So ſinks the day-ſtar in the ocean bed,
And yet anon uprears his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new ſpangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning ſky—
He hears the unexpreſſive nuptial ſong
In the bleſt kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the ſaints above,
In ſolemn troops, and ſweet ſocieties,
That ſing, and ſinging in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.

MILTON.

[a] 2 Eſdr. ii. 45—47.

THE END.

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